

HISTORY AND
RHYMES OF THE
LOST BATTALION



U. S. OFFICIAL

LIEUT.-COL. CHARLES W. WHITTLESEY
Commander of the "Lost Battalion"



HISTORY AND RHYMES OF THE LOST BATTALION

By
"Buck Private" McCollum

Sketches by
Franklin Sly



U. S. Official Photograph of the "Lost Battalion," taken in France shortly after the men were relieved, and near the famous "pocket" the men were trapped in.



HISTORY AND RHYMES OF THE LOST BATTALION

By
"Buck Private" McCollum

Sketches by
Franklin Sly

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L. C. McCOLLUM

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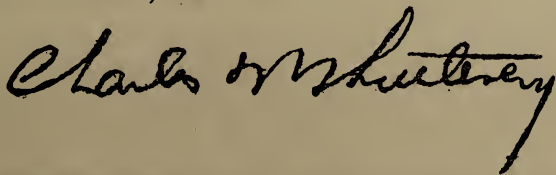
Four Hundredth Thousand

A Tribute

*Written Expressly for This Publication by Lieut. Col. C.
W. Whittlesey, Commander of "The Lost Battalion"*

As one of the members of a regiment that fought in France, the memories that are most vivid with me, now that two years have gone since the war has ended, are the memories of the nights and days when the simple unknown soldiers of the regiment showed their fineness under trial. In a forest in north-eastern France in a cold and damp October, without rations, without surgical attention, cut off, as they supposed, from the notice of their fellow men, they gave to the day's hardships and duties a courage and plain human kindness that will always make one proud of the record of the American soldier. Such achievements are not attributable to any officer or group of officers or leaders. They arise from brave men working unselfishly together with faith in the cause which they serve. When an individual shows courage under stress, we feel a thrill at his achievement, but when a group of men flash out in the splendor of manliness we feel a lasting glow that is both pride and renewed faith in our fellow men. And as a member of such a regiment, for which I feel deep affection, I feel a bond of understanding and fellowship for the American soldier in every place and time, doing his job simply and finely, asking neither sympathy nor praise. May the armistice be lasting, and these great qualities find their true place in Peace.

November 11, 1920.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Charles W. Whittlesey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Memorial Address

By COL. N. K. AVERILL
of the 308th Regiment

At Services of Lieut. Col. Charles W. Whittlesey

We of the 308th have come to pay a last tribute to the memory of our loved comrade and friend Charles Whittlesey.

I speak for the heart of the regiment when I say that we all are mindful of his outstanding character—mindful first of that attribute given to few men—the absolute lack of fear, seen and known by many of us before that day when he sprang into world-wide fame. Ordered to advance thru the densest part of the thicket of the great forest of the Argonne to take a certain fixed objective and hold it, he succeeded, and alone with his battalion reached the designated point far in advance of the troops on his right or left. The enemy soon surrounded his position, and then began those numerous attacks lasting four days and nights, over one hundred hours passed without food of any kind and with but little water. With the majority of his command killed or wounded, surrounded by the dead and dying, with no succor or help for the wounded and yet when the call for the surrender came, how instantly he refused it, and took in at once the only bit of white showing—the white of the ground panel for signalling to the Air Service; thus saying “They shall not pass” and no Hun passed save from the Here to the Hereafter. No man as a soldier can stand higher in the history of the republic and no man is more entitled to the nation’s gratitude.

Mindful too of the wonderful mind, we were more impressed by that stern and strict conscience, the inheritance of those Puritan ancestors, a conscience always sure of the right and from which line of

action no power could ever make him change. Coupled with all this was the highest sense of duty I have ever seen.

Mindful too of that other side of his character, the gentle and sympathetic nature which was so marked on all occasions, causing him to be known as "Brother Charles," I know that I speak for all of us when I say that it has been given to none to ever meet a man who more closely approached that knightly Bayard of old in that he was without fear and without reproach.

While at first we were stunned and could hardly credit the news, yet the more I think his case over the more firmly I am convinced that his death was in reality a battle casualty and that he met his end as much in the line of duty as if he had fallen by a German bullet on the Vesle or in the Argonne. The scars of conflict or the wounds of battle are not always of the flesh. We, of the Regular Army have seen too often the results of mental strain, even in the older soldiers.

Let us briefly review his war service. Answering at once his country's call and coming from his quiet, scholastic life of a city lawyer, he was thrown almost immediately into the fiercest fighting the World has ever known. How heroically he arose to the emergency suddenly thrust upon him history will always tell, but what a mental strain it must have been on that shy, retiring, kindly and lovable man when he could do nothing to relieve the suffering or the agony of those gallant men dying beside him—and this after all had reached the last stages of physical exhaustion due to a hundred-hours constant fighting

and hunger; with this were the unspeakable conditions and the horrors of the battle field where it had been impossible to bury the dead, and the sole responsibility rested on him. Whittlesey had that rare and moral courage which makes men great, and in that emergency he held on, to the everlasting credit of the American Army.

This occurred a little over three years ago, but he has never been away from those scenes from that day on. Coming back to this country, he found himself a popular hero much against his wishes and inclination. Constantly called upon for aid and advice by the mothers and widows of the dead and missing, he gave everything he had, everything that was in him—not only to them but to all the men of the regiment, wounded and in trouble—who found in him a ready friend, counselor and aid.


His last answer to the call of duty was on November 11th, 1921, when, with the other Medal of Honor Men of the regiment, McMurtry, Miles and Kaufman, he attended the final ceremonies at Arlington for the Unknown Soldier. I think we all can see him standing there with these memories of the suffering and pain of war surging through his mind. We know how he suffered until at last that great heart broke, but the memory of Charles Whittlesey will always be an inspiration to the officers and men who served with him in France.

I can only add, speaking for the regiment, that from the heart of each of us goes up the prayer that the God, who in His Infinite Wisdom saw fit to take from our midst Charles Whittlesey, may give to his soul that peace and quiet for which he so longed.

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Foreword



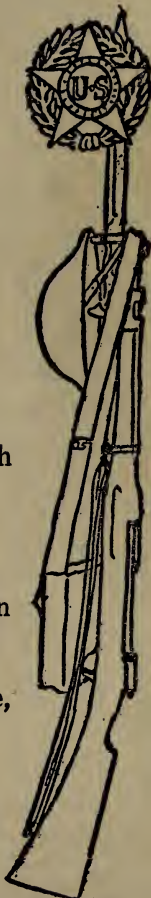
I've never had a fling at this thing,
That they call writin' an' such;
I haven't the art a genius owns
To put over the master touch.

I can only tell in a Doughboy's way,
Things that that we all lived thru,
And if perchance you were "Up There,"
You'll know that they are true.

No artist, whether good or bad,
Can paint the sunset's glow;
Nor can any man who ever came back
Describe that war and its woe.

So I'll lay no claim to the master's touch
In the thots I've expressed herein.
But when you've finished reading them,
You'll know what it cost to win.

You'll know how a Doughboy feels when
he fights,
And also the joys of his play;
So may you accept them just as they are,
In a Doughboy's own crude way.



Buck Private McCallum





308TH INFANTRY POST NO. 308

THE AMERICAN LEGION

27 WEST 25TH STREET

New York. March 20, 1923.

To Whom It May Concern:

"The History and Rhymes of the Lost Battalion," by L. C. McCollum, impressed me favorably as to its historical and educational value. It is a story of that episode which concerned us so closely. The entertaining poems are characteristic of that humor which always applied to the true American spirit. I appointed a Committee, composed of Major George T. McMurtry, second in command of the "pocket", Major Lucien S. Breckinridge, and Lieutenant Lester M. Brown (all of the 308th Infantry), to pass upon the merits of the book, and they have reported favorably and in part as follows:

"We feel that the Post can very well endorse McCollum's book as historically correct and further as an exceedingly interesting and instructive memoir of one of the great deeds of the War. There is much interesting and instructive material in the book."

This book, while written partly in a humorous vein, reveals the Hell thru which the American soldier passed. It cannot fail to arouse that patriotism and love of country hidden in every true American heart, and is a story that can be proudly handed down from generation to generation. I wish to add that at a meeting of the Post the men unanimously voted that "We endorse McCollum's book."

Arthur C. Brucks

Arthur C. Brucks,
Post Commander,
308th Infantry Post
New York City.

Up There

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Perhaps those two short words,
Don't sound like much to you;
But they are the entire volume
Of what we have been thru.

They tell of Chateau-Thierry and the Vesle,
And many a brave and daring tale—
Of the Argonne Woods, that terrible hell
Where so many of our brave comrades fell.

They fell for a cause that was just and true,
To them an undying tribute is due.
May God rest their souls is our silent prayer,
For those who gave their all—"Up There."

*This volume is dedicated to the memory of
'My Buddies' who gave their all "Up There."*



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Bully Beef

I love my Canned Bill, I never knew
How good that stuff could taste in stew.
I love it hot, I love it cold,
Corn Willie never will grow old.

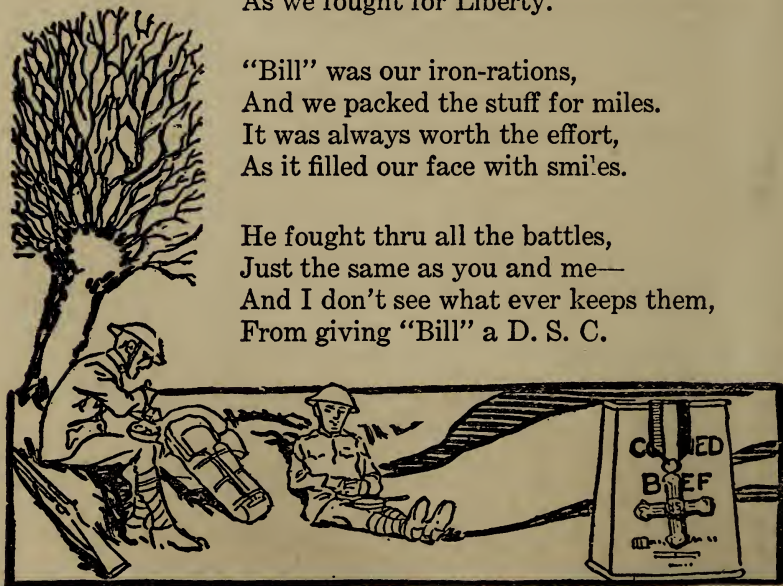


If you walked into the kitchen
When thru your morning's drill,
You could bet your old "Tin Derby"
There you'd meet your friend "Corn Bill."

It's the thing that licked the Kaiser
In that land across the sea—
And it drove away our troubles,
As we fought for Liberty.

"Bill" was our iron-rations,
And we packed the stuff for miles.
It was always worth the effort,
As it filled our face with smiles.

He fought thru all the battles,
Just the same as you and me—
And I don't see what ever keeps them,
From giving "Bill" a D. S. C.



Killed in Action

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

"Killed in action," so they say,
Poor little fellow had lost his way.
In Argonne Woods and up on the Vesle
He dug like fury and crawled like a snail.

My billet was small, but he didn't care,
He'd dig himself in, and stay right there.
He'd make things snappy while "diggin' in,"
He was plumb full of hell and fought to win.

Tho small of stature, he was full of fight,
And went "Over the Top" most every night,
Now all the boys knew him, up on the line,
As he kept them company all the time.

He "fell in action," game to the last,
As thru our delouser the "wee fellow" passed,
"Good-bye little cootie," we leave you in
France
We "killed you in action"—and were glad of
the chance.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Rain! Rain! Rain!

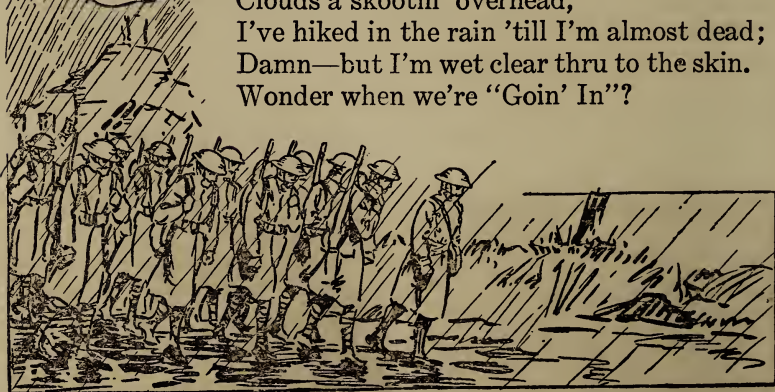
Ever since I landed here,
Things have looked so dull and drear,
Wonder when I'll smile again,
Wonder why there's so much rain?

My face and hands are badly peeled,
Doing "As Skirmishers" in sodden fields,
Body aches from chills and pains,
And still it rains, and rains, and rains.

Tomorrow we'll be on our way
To "The Front" I hear them say;
Tonight we load upon the trains.
Wonder why it rains and rains?

The guy who wrote 'bout Sunny France,
Sure was in an awful trance;
Wish the ol' sun would come peepin' thru,
Perhaps things wouldn't look so blue.

Clouds a skootin' overhead,
I've hiked in the rain 'till I'm almost dead;
Damn—but I'm wet clear thru to the skin.
Wonder when we're "Goin' In"?



Earth seems to be in a quivering fright,
Wonder how it'd seem to be home tonight?
Never that I'd be "Over Here"—
Gee, but this rain makes a fellow feel queer.

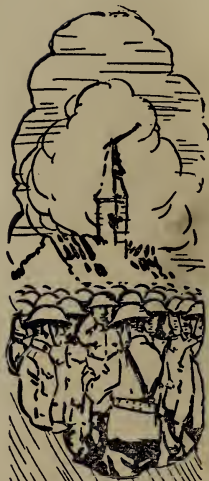
"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Been in the lines near thirty days,
Know I'm changed in lots of ways;
Now I know why I had that trainin'—
Wonder when it's going to stop rainin'?

Got relieved from the lines last night.
Gee, but this beard of mine's a fright!
Hiked a thousand kilos or more—
Damn this rain it's makin' me sore.

Been in the lines since last September,
An' here it is 'way up in November,
But now we got 'em on the run,
Wonder if this rain is rainin' for fun?

Boys ain't talkin' much today,
What they're thinkin' none can say.
We just got the news that the war is done—!
Must be right 'cause *there's the sun!*



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Gassed

I've gone all day in a sort of daze,
An' felt the horror of death;
I don't mind the fight 'cause I know I'm right,
But I'm worried about my breath.



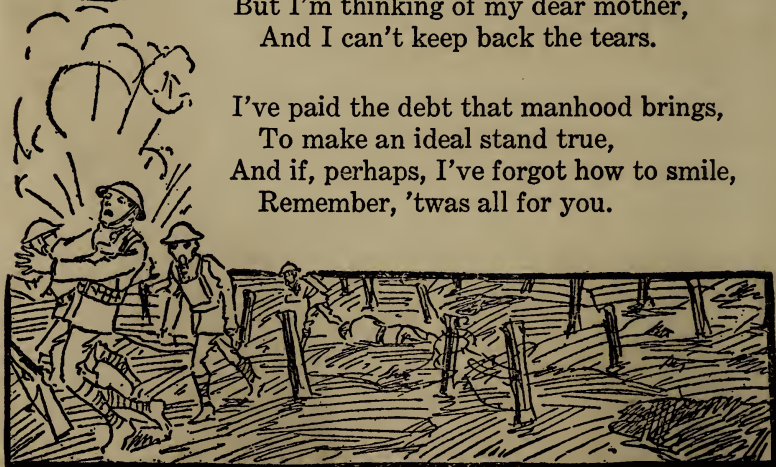
It feels like a ball of red-hot fire
Turned loose from hell's own door,
An' there seems to be no relief for me;
It's hurting me more and more.



I can feel myself go crumpling,
And I fall in a sudden heap.
Then slowly the truth dawns on me—
I was gassed last night in my sleep.

The doctor says I'll pull thru all right
And am good for a few more years;
But I'm thinking of my dear mother,
And I can't keep back the tears.

I've paid the debt that manhood brings,
To make an ideal stand true,
And if, perhaps, I've forgot how to smile,
Remember, 'twas all for you.



Oh, Boy!

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

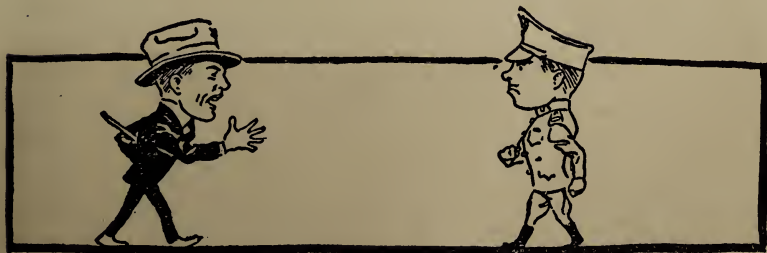
Dressed again in your civvies,
And strolling down the street
Some day a former officer,
You will surely meet.

You will snap up to attention,
As you've always done before,
Only to find on inspection
He's the one man you abhor.



Then your thots will quickly wander,
Back again to "Rainy France,"
And you'll get your inspiration;
"Oh Boy! Here is my chance!"

So you'll bring your hand up smartly
"Till it's somewhere near your nose—
And your face lights up with a smile of joy,
As you say to yourself, "Here Goes!"



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

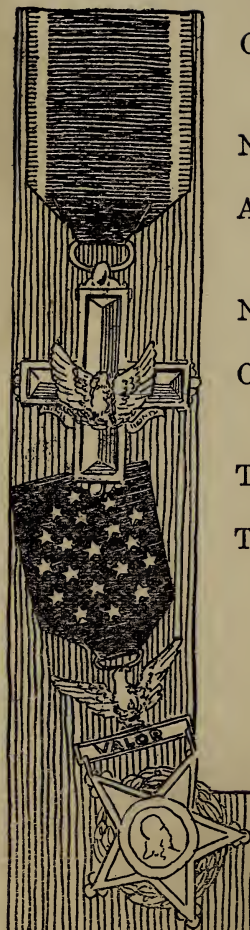
The Medal

It is not the bit of bronze and metal,
That tells the time-worn tale,
Of some act of heroism
Where the bullets whine and wail.

Nor is the colored ribbon,
Pinned on some strutting chest,
A truthful indication,
Of the man who fought the best.

Nor do gold stripes upon the arm
Always tell the story,
Of men who have seen action
Or fought their way to glory.

These are outward indications
Made by the hand of man.
The way they're sometimes passed about
Is hard to understand.



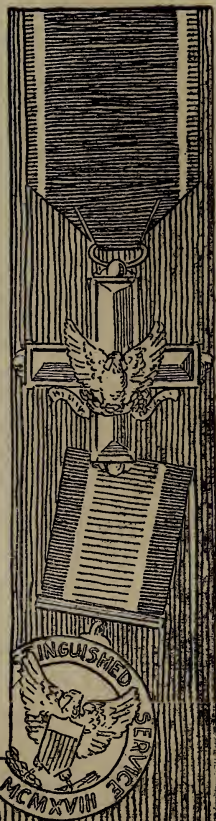
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

They may tarnish with the weather,
In the plush or on the shelf—
For the real and lasting medal
Is the soul within yourself.

If you did your best when called on
In the air or torn shell-hole,
You've got some real satisfaction
Buried deep within your soul.

No bit of bronze or ribbon bright,
Or words of praise high spoken,
Can change the thots that lie within—
For this is the genuine token.

They tell the tale as long as you live,
And the truth of how you fought.
If you played the game like a man, my friend,
You've the medal that can't be bought.



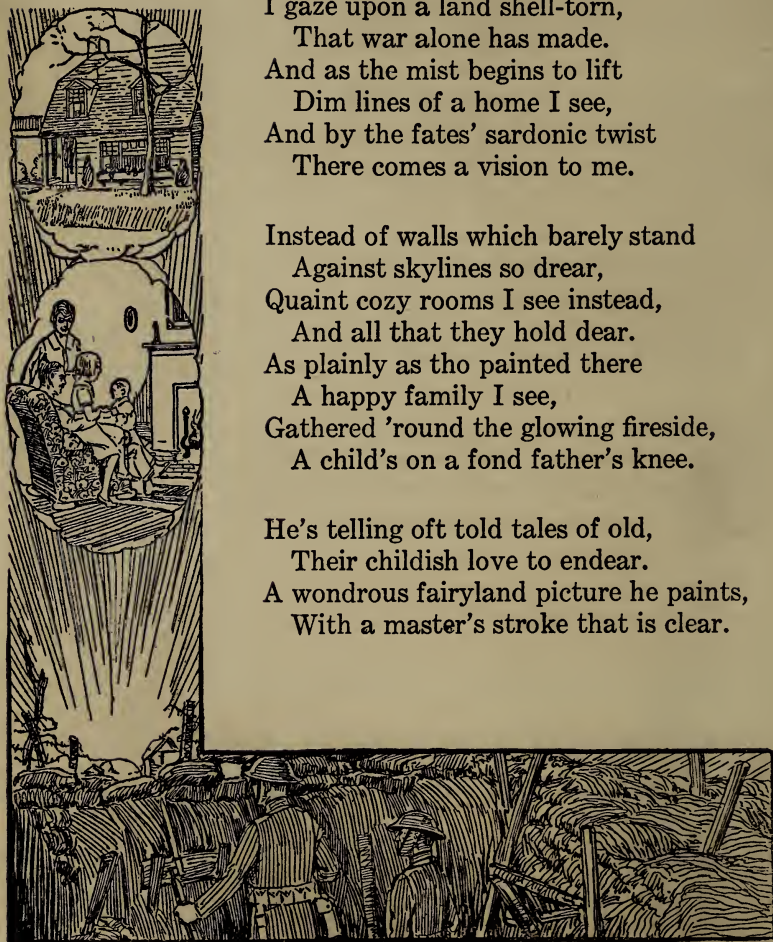
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Visions

In early morn when day is born,
Night shadows start to fade,
I gaze upon a land shell-torn,
That war alone has made.
And as the mist begins to lift
Dim lines of a home I see,
And by the fates' sardonic twist
There comes a vision to me.

Instead of walls which barely stand
Against skylines so drear,
Quaint cozy rooms I see instead,
And all that they hold dear.
As plainly as tho painted there
A happy family I see,
Gathered 'round the glowing fireside,
A child's on a fond father's knee.

He's telling oft told tales of old,
Their childish love to endear.
A wondrous fairyland picture he paints,
With a master's stroke that is clear.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Then comes the end of this simple tale,
'Tis rewarded with cries of delight—
Lovelight glows in their trusting eyes
As in turn they kiss him good night.

Off to bed they go a-romping,
Then climb some queer turning stairs.
By a crude old-fashioned home-made bed,
They kneel to say their prayers.
"Bless mama, and papa, and give
Peace on Earth, good will to men."
Then as the mother tucks them in,
One shyly whispers, "Amen."

* * *

But now the vision is fading,
And again by the will of fate
From behind barren walls comes a war-dog,
And all thots of love go to hate.
From my right comes the pop of a
"Browning,"

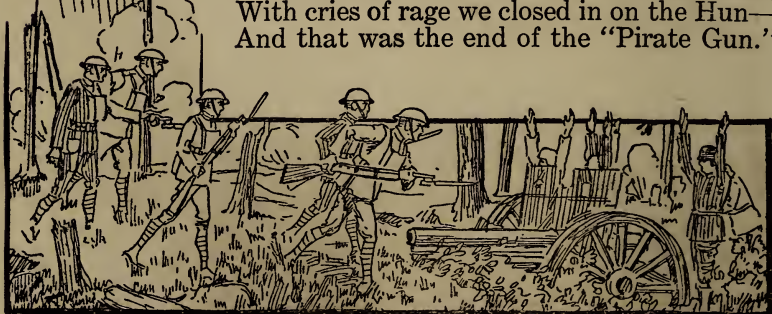
Which makes my blood run chill;
My Vision's gone—I stand alone,
My business here is to kill.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

The Pirate Gun

List to the tale of the Pirate Gun,
That kept on firing when war was done;
'Twas up near Stonney, back of Raucort,
Where battles were long and rations short.
'Twas Armistice night, and we'd hunted all
day,
For a place to sleep in the "Frogs" dry hay.
When a Pirate Gun's shell screeched over the
hill,
We quickly scattered and "dug in" with a
will.
Through the cold wet night, 'neath a mud
cressed knoll,
We shivered and shook as we lay in our hole,
The Captain looked worried, things didn't
seem right,
And he cussed with the rest as we waited all
night.
He was mad as a hornet when we started the
hunt,
For the crazy gun that had pulled that stunt;
And after we'd hunted all day in vain,
Everyone was cussing that gun and the rain.
When "Bang!" came a shot from right under
our nose,
And there lay the "Pirate Gun" fully exposed,
With cries of rage we closed in on the Hun—
And that was the end of the "Pirate Gun."



The Buck

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

I'm a lucky son-of-a-gun,
I'm the guy that had the fun,
My clothes were never spick and span,
I was just "Plain Buck"—"The Fightin'
Man."

I should worry if my feet were bare,
Or cooties made their nests in my hair,
Or the Captain cussed me every day,
I went right along in my own plain way.

I fought the battle of "Ole' Vin Roo"—
And was in on the drive on "Army Stew,"
No hampered Looeys could break my heart,
I just stalled along and did my part.

Whenever the boys felt homesick and blue,
They'd call on me for a story or two,
I made them laugh with my song and dance,
And put some sunshine in "Rainy Ole'
France."

I never craved for rank or fame,
Always took things just as they came,
And I earned a title that will always stick;
"Plain Ole' Buck,"—"Champion Gold Brick."



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Those Who Wait

*Who knows the thots of mothers who wait,
Whether in grandeur, or lowly state?
Who knows the sacrifice of those who give
Their all, their sons, that we might live?*

The days are long as I sit here and knit,
Fashioning these socks for him—bit by bit;
My thots are ever one constant prayer
For my boy, my all, who's "Over There."

The long endless nights bring no rest,
My baby again nestles close to my breast.
The sense of his touch brings sweet poignant
joy,
"May God watch o'er him, my own—my
boy."

He was only a lad, but then he would go,
I'm heartsick, dear Lord, but proud of him
tho,
Our country needed him, he heard the call,
Light's gone from life, for he is my all.



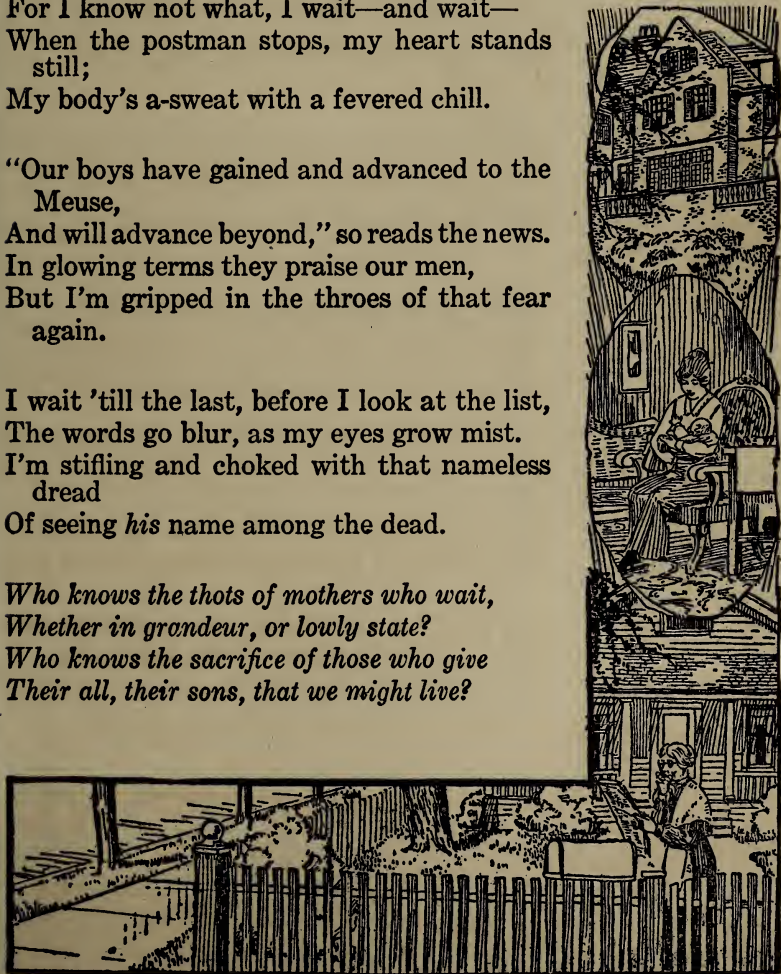
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Watching the mail box here by the gate,
For I know not what, I wait—and wait—
When the postman stops, my heart stands
still;
My body's a-sweat with a fevered chill.

"Our boys have gained and advanced to the
Meuse,
And will advance beyond," so reads the news.
In glowing terms they praise our men,
But I'm gripped in the throes of that fear
again.

I wait 'till the last, before I look at the list,
The words go blur, as my eyes grow mist.
I'm stifling and choked with that nameless
dread
Of seeing *his* name among the dead.

*Who knows the throes of mothers who wait,
Whether in grandeur, or lowly state?
Who knows the sacrifice of those who give
Their all, their sons, that we might live?*



My Pals

Of three Pals of mine I would tell,
And how they helped me live thru hell,
First, there's "Billy," my old gas mask,
For a better Pal you could never ask.

The first time I used him (well, I remember),
Was up in the "Argonne," late in September;
Gas alarm sounded, it brought a cold chill,
But with "Billy" on, it changed to a thrill.

I pictured myself laying out there dead,
But grabbed and put on old "Billy" instead,
Three hours we lived thru that hellish gas,
Since then he's my pal, first and last.

Next comes "Jim," my old "diggin' in" tool,
He was more than a pal, except to a fool.
He helped me "dig in" both night and day,
And made me war wise in his own quiet way.

We dug thru rock and sometimes ground,
Then slept the sleep of a dog-tired hound,
And thru many battles of raging hell,
He was my Pal, and served me well.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Last, but not least, comes "Jack," that boy,
Who was my one comfort and eternal joy.
Only a "tin derby" he's often been called,
But never yet has old Jack stalled.

I've used him as a writing pad,
And as a seat he's not half bad;
Used him to pound those queer tent poles,
And for protection in slimy shell holes.

Battered and scarred, shelltorn and marred,
Beyond recognition was he,
For turning the "Boches" shrapnel,
Had been his real specialty.

He nestled close to my kinky head,
And kept me from numbering among the
dead.

That's "Jack's" story, and I must own,
He was more to me than some king's throne.

So, if perhaps they seem a bit proud,
Remember they're part of my fighting crowd,
And now they're taking a well earned rest,
In the corner of the room that I love best.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

History of the Lost Battalion

THAT proper recognition may be given all units represented in the Lost Battalion, I quote herewith; General Robert Alexander's Citation of the "Lost Battalion" published April 15th, 1919 in France, as follows:

"General orders No. 30:

"I desire to publish to the command an official recognition of the valor and extraordinary heroism in action of the officers and enlisted men of the following organizations:

Company A, 308th Infantry

Company B, 308th Infantry

Company C, 308th Infantry

Company E, 308th Infantry

Company G, 308th Infantry

Company H, 308th Infantry

Company K, 307th Infantry

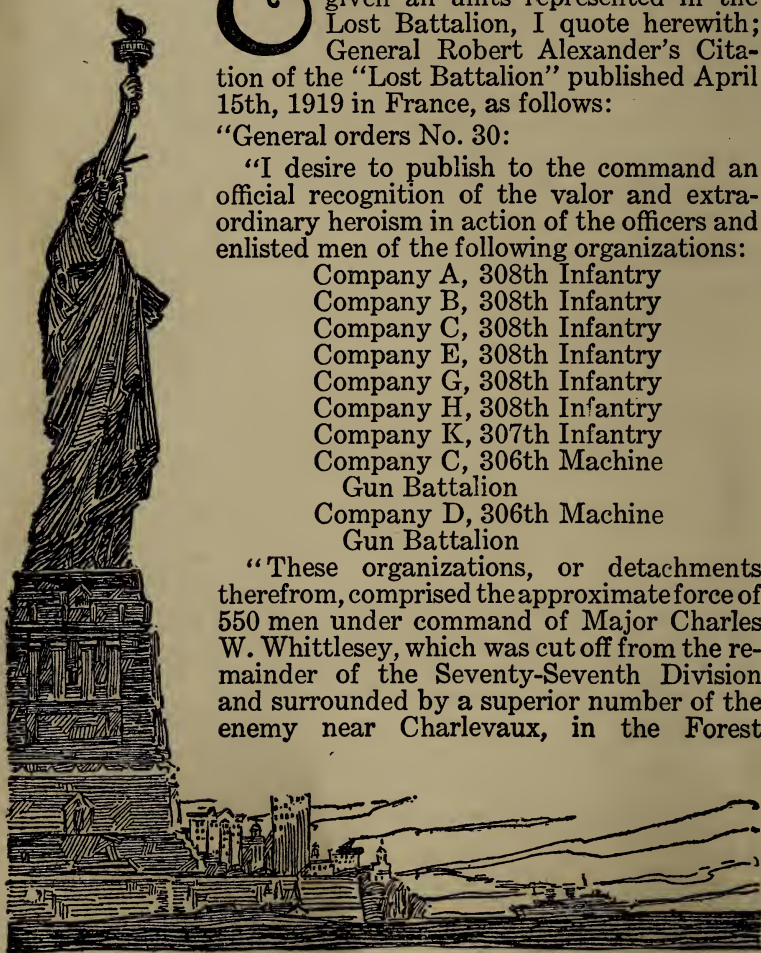
Company C, 306th Machine

Gun Battalion

Company D, 306th Machine

Gun Battalion

"These organizations, or detachments therefrom, comprised the approximate force of 550 men under command of Major Charles W. Whittlesey, which was cut off from the remainder of the Seventy-Seventh Division and surrounded by a superior number of the enemy near Charlevaux, in the Forest



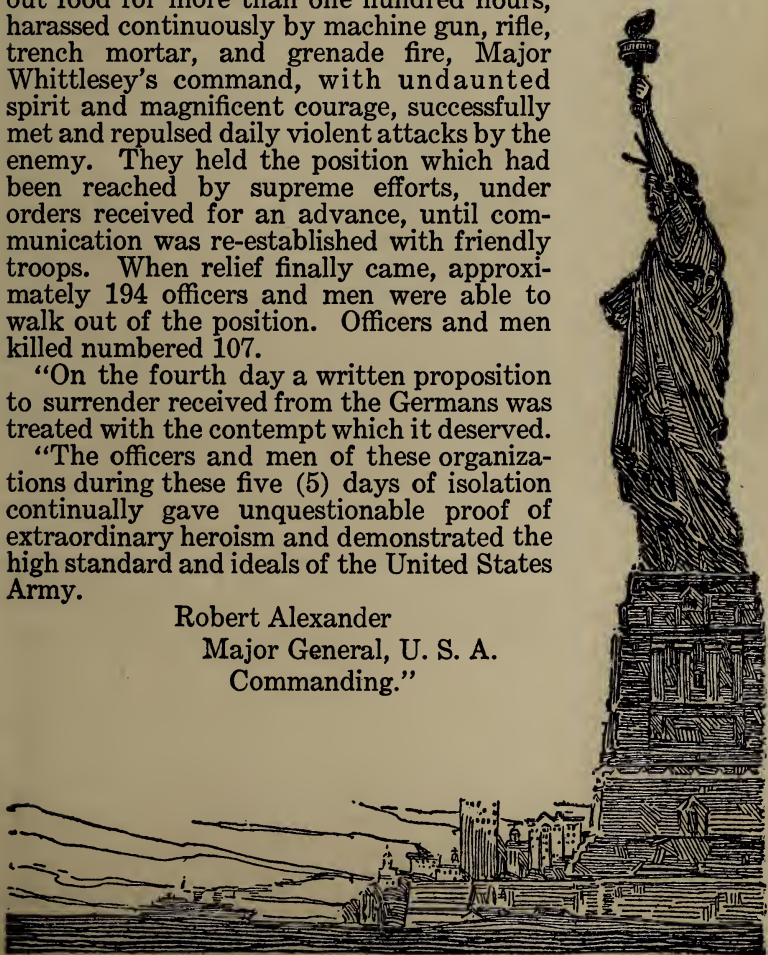
*"Rhymes
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Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

d'Argonne, from the morning of October 3, 1918, to the night of October 7, 1918. Without food for more than one hundred hours, harassed continuously by machine gun, rifle, trench mortar, and grenade fire, Major Whittlesey's command, with undaunted spirit and magnificent courage, successfully met and repulsed daily violent attacks by the enemy. They held the position which had been reached by supreme efforts, under orders received for an advance, until communication was re-established with friendly troops. When relief finally came, approximately 194 officers and men were able to walk out of the position. Officers and men killed numbered 107.

"On the fourth day a written proposition to surrender received from the Germans was treated with the contempt which it deserved.

"The officers and men of these organizations during these five (5) days of isolation continually gave unquestionable proof of extraordinary heroism and demonstrated the high standard and ideals of the United States Army.

Robert Alexander
Major General, U. S. A.
Commanding."

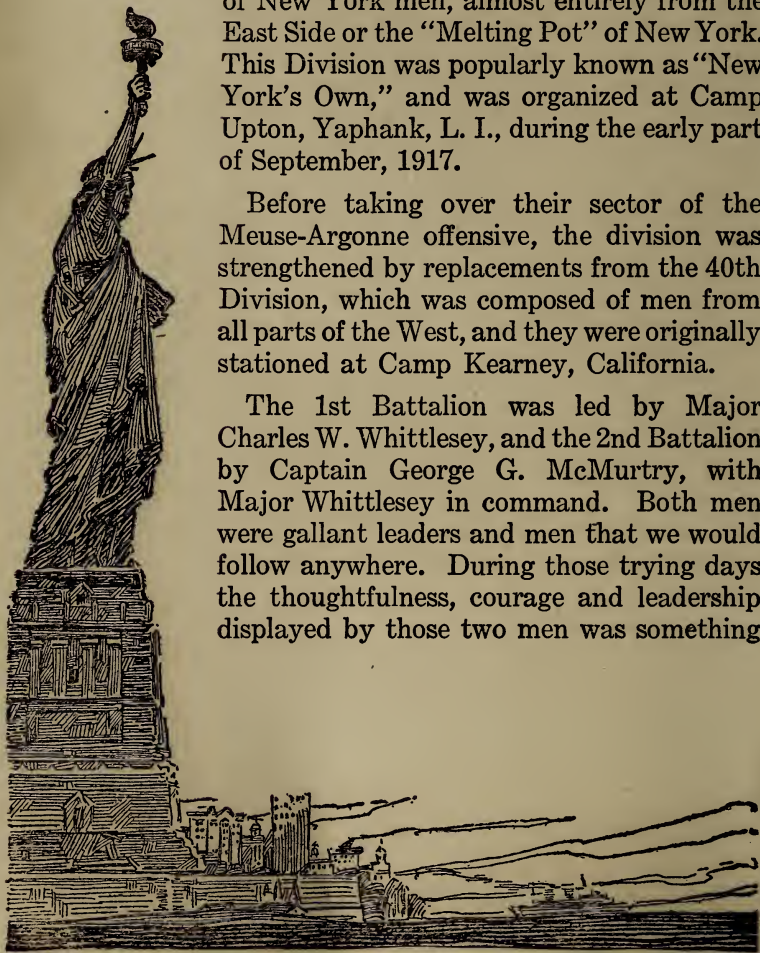


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Originally the 77th Division was made up of New York men, almost entirely from the East Side or the "Melting Pot" of New York. This Division was popularly known as "New York's Own," and was organized at Camp Upton, Yaphank, L. I., during the early part of September, 1917.

Before taking over their sector of the Meuse-Argonne offensive, the division was strengthened by replacements from the 40th Division, which was composed of men from all parts of the West, and they were originally stationed at Camp Kearney, California.

The 1st Battalion was led by Major Charles W. Whittlesey, and the 2nd Battalion by Captain George G. McMurtry, with Major Whittlesey in command. Both men were gallant leaders and men that we would follow anywhere. During those trying days the thoughtfulness, courage and leadership displayed by those two men was something

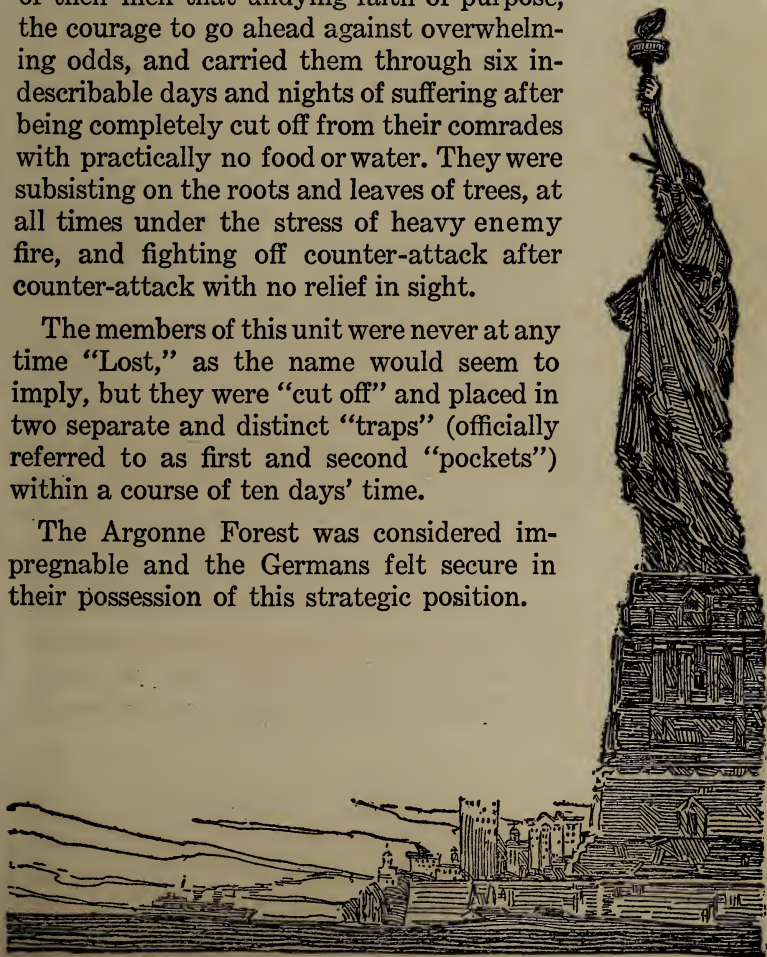


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wonderful to see. It instilled into the hearts of their men that undying faith of purpose, the courage to go ahead against overwhelming odds, and carried them through six indescribable days and nights of suffering after being completely cut off from their comrades with practically no food or water. They were subsisting on the roots and leaves of trees, at all times under the stress of heavy enemy fire, and fighting off counter-attack after counter-attack with no relief in sight.

The members of this unit were never at any time "Lost," as the name would seem to imply, but they were "cut off" and placed in two separate and distinct "traps" (officially referred to as first and second "pockets") within a course of ten days' time.

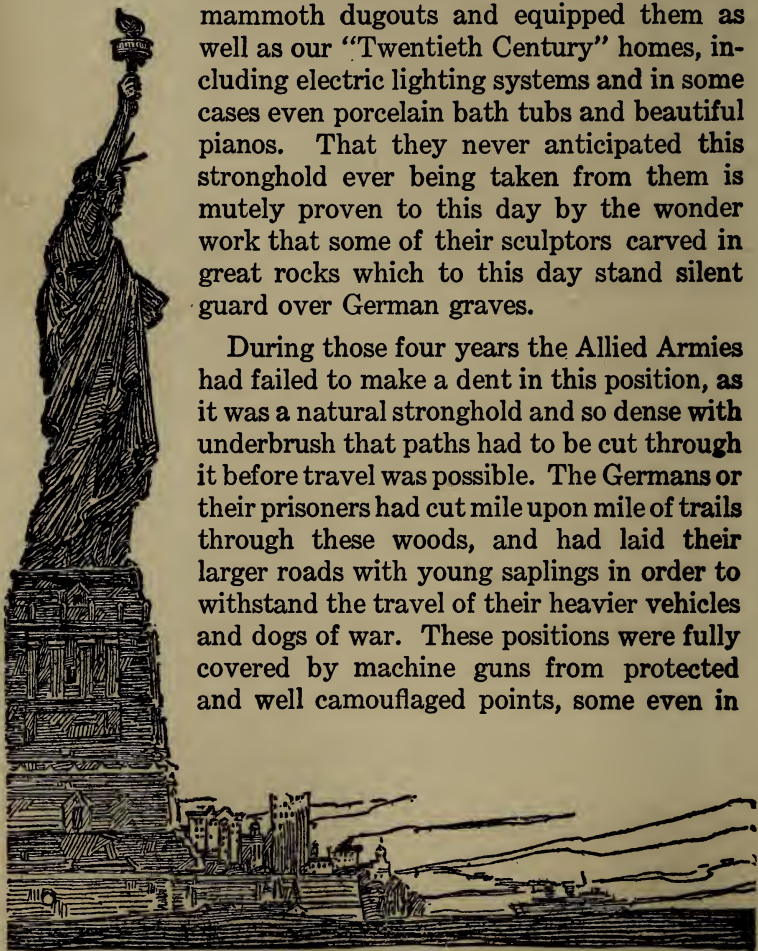
The Argonne Forest was considered impregnable and the Germans felt secure in their possession of this strategic position.



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During the four years of their possession they had built concrete trenches, theaters, mammoth dugouts and equipped them as well as our "Twentieth Century" homes, including electric lighting systems and in some cases even porcelain bath tubs and beautiful pianos. That they never anticipated this stronghold ever being taken from them is mutely proven to this day by the wonder work that some of their sculptors carved in great rocks which to this day stand silent guard over German graves.

During those four years the Allied Armies had failed to make a dent in this position, as it was a natural stronghold and so dense with underbrush that paths had to be cut through it before travel was possible. The Germans or their prisoners had cut mile upon mile of trails through these woods, and had laid their larger roads with young saplings in order to withstand the travel of their heavier vehicles and dogs of war. These positions were fully covered by machine guns from protected and well camouflaged points, some even in

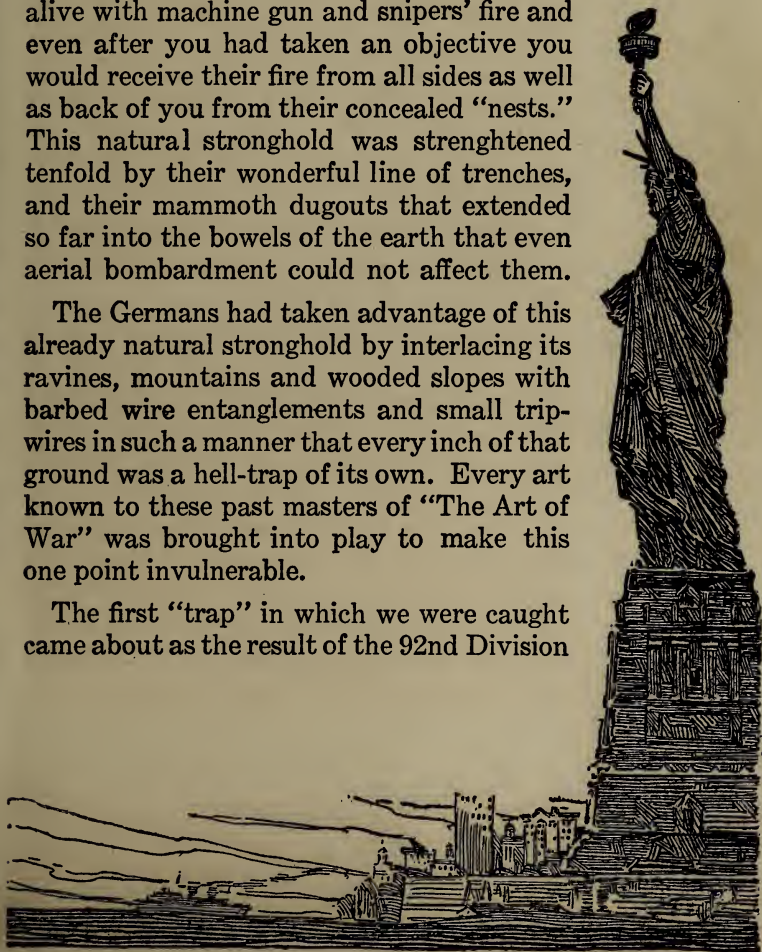


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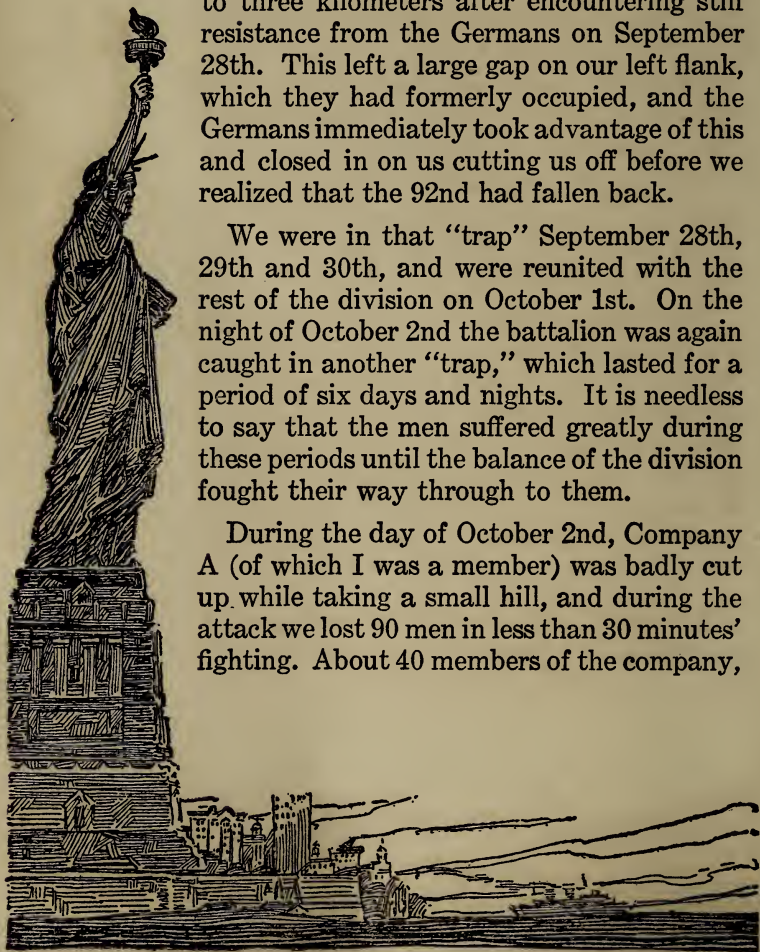
trees on tops of hills, giving them a full sweep as far as they could see. These trails were alive with machine gun and snipers' fire and even after you had taken an objective you would receive their fire from all sides as well as back of you from their concealed "nests." This natural stronghold was strenghtened tenfold by their wonderful line of trenches, and their mammoth dugouts that extended so far into the bowels of the earth that even aerial bombardment could not affect them.

The Germans had taken advantage of this already natural stronghold by interlacing its ravines, mountains and wooded slopes with barbed wire entanglements and small trip-wires in such a manner that every inch of that ground was a hell-trap of its own. Every art known to these past masters of "The Art of War" was brought into play to make this one point invulnerable.

The first "trap" in which we were caught came about as the result of the 92nd Division



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(a negro unit) retiring a distance of from two to three kilometers after encountering stiff resistance from the Germans on September 28th. This left a large gap on our left flank, which they had formerly occupied, and the Germans immediately took advantage of this and closed in on us cutting us off before we realized that the 92nd had fallen back.

We were in that "trap" September 28th, 29th and 30th, and were reunited with the rest of the division on October 1st. On the night of October 2nd the battalion was again caught in another "trap," which lasted for a period of six days and nights. It is needless to say that the men suffered greatly during these periods until the balance of the division fought their way through to them.

During the day of October 2nd, Company A (of which I was a member) was badly cut up while taking a small hill, and during the attack we lost 90 men in less than 30 minutes' fighting. About 40 members of the company,

including myself, were sent back by Major Whittlesey to establish posts of communication and to act as stretcher bearers, as men were being wounded faster than they could be handled. Eighteen of the company remained with the Major and were caught in the second trap.

We fought desperately during those si days, going "Over the Top" as often as three times in one day. That you may have some idea of the cost of the ground taken in those Argonne Woods, can give you the facts of my own company of which I have an intimate knowledge. We went "Over the Top" on the morning of September 26th with 250 men, and on the night of October 15th there were only 44 of us followed Major Whittlesey out of the front lines to the second lines of support near Grand Pre.

The following article is reprinted here by courtesy of The American Legion Weekly and William E. Moore



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How the Lost Battalion Was Lost

The True Story of an Heroic Incident of the
World War in the Light of a Tragedy of Peace

By WILLIAM E. MOORE

Formerly Captain, S. C., Historical Branch, G. H. Q., A. E. F.



A LEADING New York newspaper that should have known better, since a score of its pre-war staff were officers in the 77th Division, suggested the other day that Lieutenant Colonel Whittlesey might have been driven to suicide through a feeling of guilt for having led the "Lost Battalion" into a trap in the Argonne ravine since famous as "The Pocket." But since all America is so fully misinformed not only concerning Whittlesey, but as regards most everything else that took place in the A. E. F., it would be

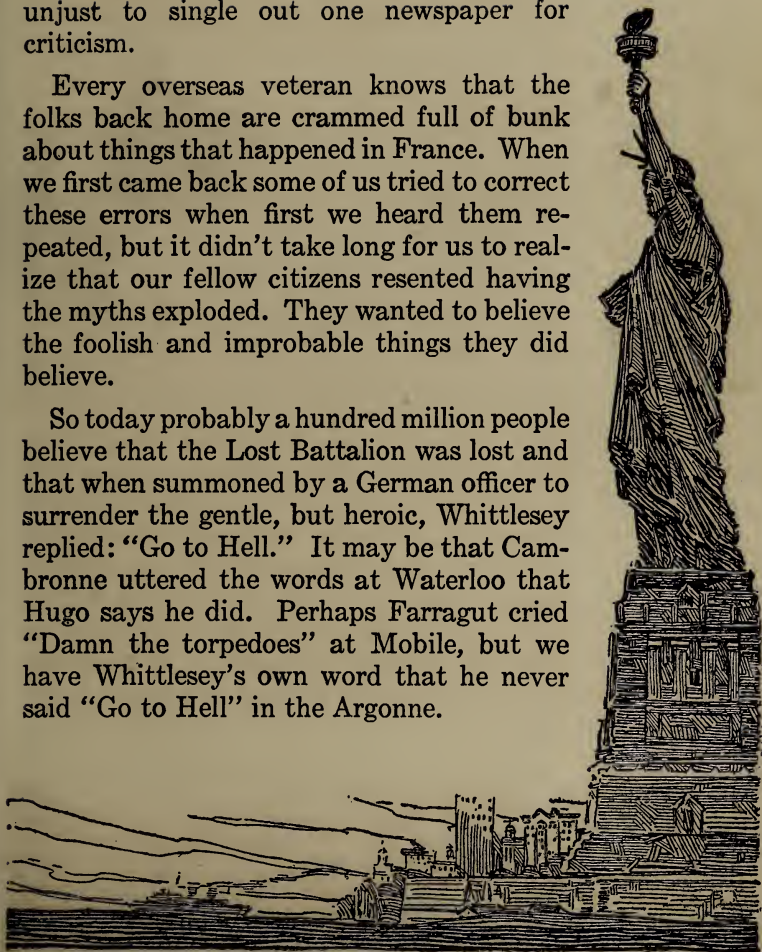


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unjust to single out one newspaper for criticism.

Every overseas veteran knows that the folks back home are crammed full of bunk about things that happened in France. When we first came back some of us tried to correct these errors when first we heard them repeated, but it didn't take long for us to realize that our fellow citizens resented having the myths exploded. They wanted to believe the foolish and improbable things they did believe.

So today probably a hundred million people believe that the Lost Battalion was lost and that when summoned by a German officer to surrender the gentle, but heroic, Whittlesey replied: "Go to Hell." It may be that Cambronne uttered the words at Waterloo that Hugo says he did. Perhaps Farragut cried "Damn the torpedoes" at Mobile, but we have Whittlesey's own word that he never said "Go to Hell" in the Argonne.

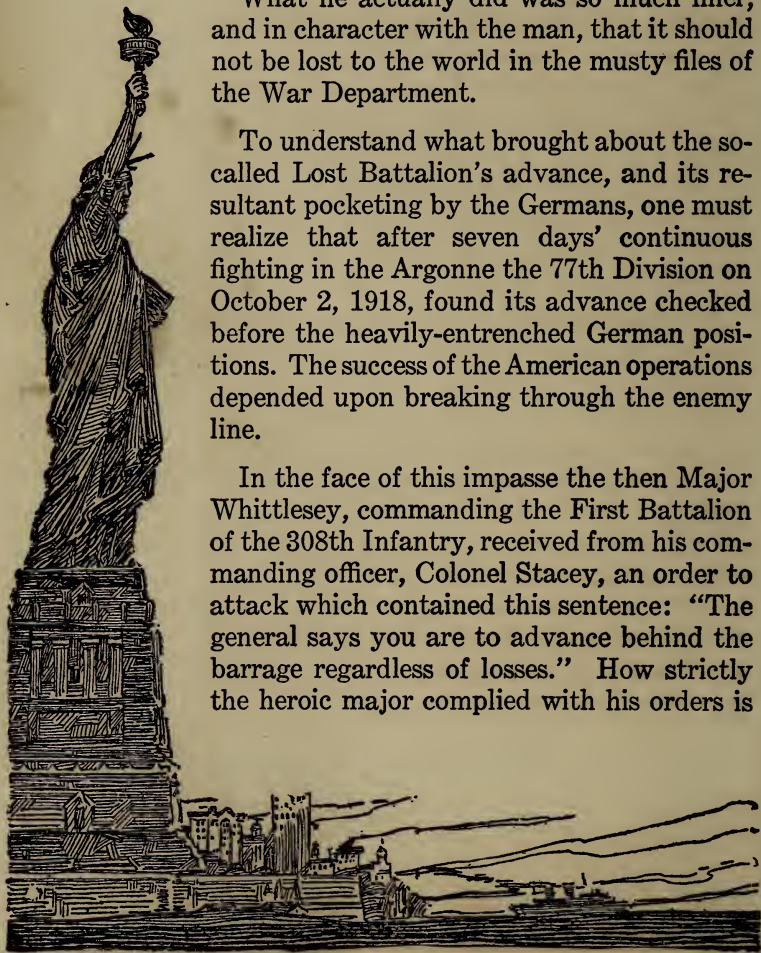


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What he actually did was so much finer, and in character with the man, that it should not be lost to the world in the musty files of the War Department.

To understand what brought about the so-called Lost Battalion's advance, and its resultant pocketing by the Germans, one must realize that after seven days' continuous fighting in the Argonne the 77th Division on October 2, 1918, found its advance checked before the heavily-entrenched German positions. The success of the American operations depended upon breaking through the enemy line.

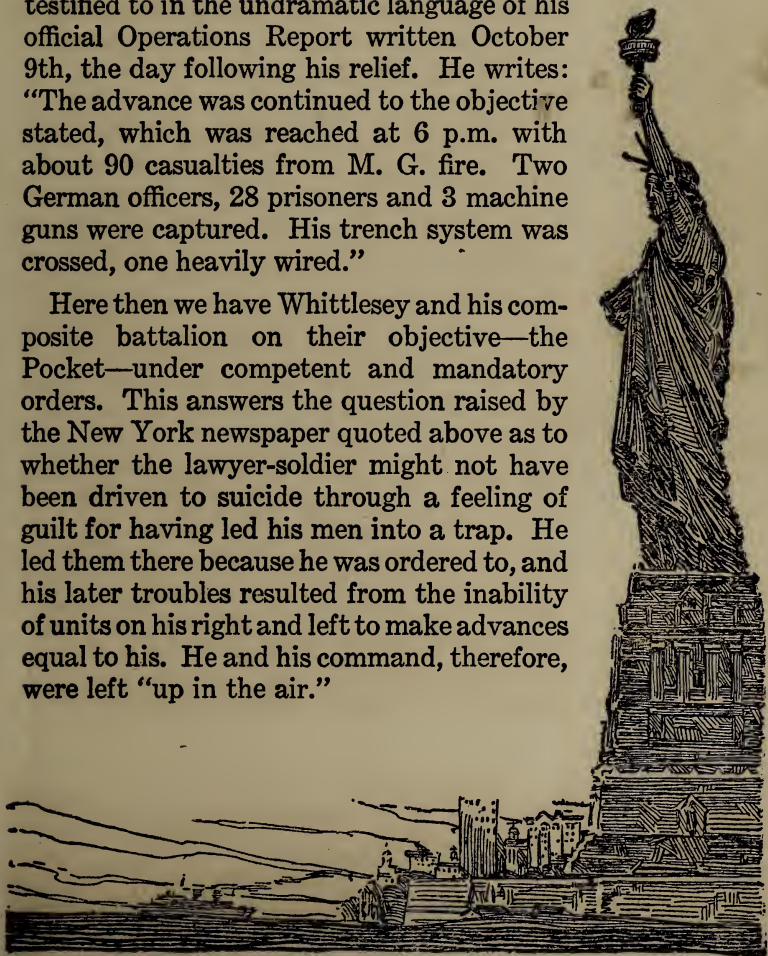
In the face of this impasse the then Major Whittlesey, commanding the First Battalion of the 308th Infantry, received from his commanding officer, Colonel Stacey, an order to attack which contained this sentence: "The general says you are to advance behind the barrage regardless of losses." How strictly the heroic major complied with his orders is



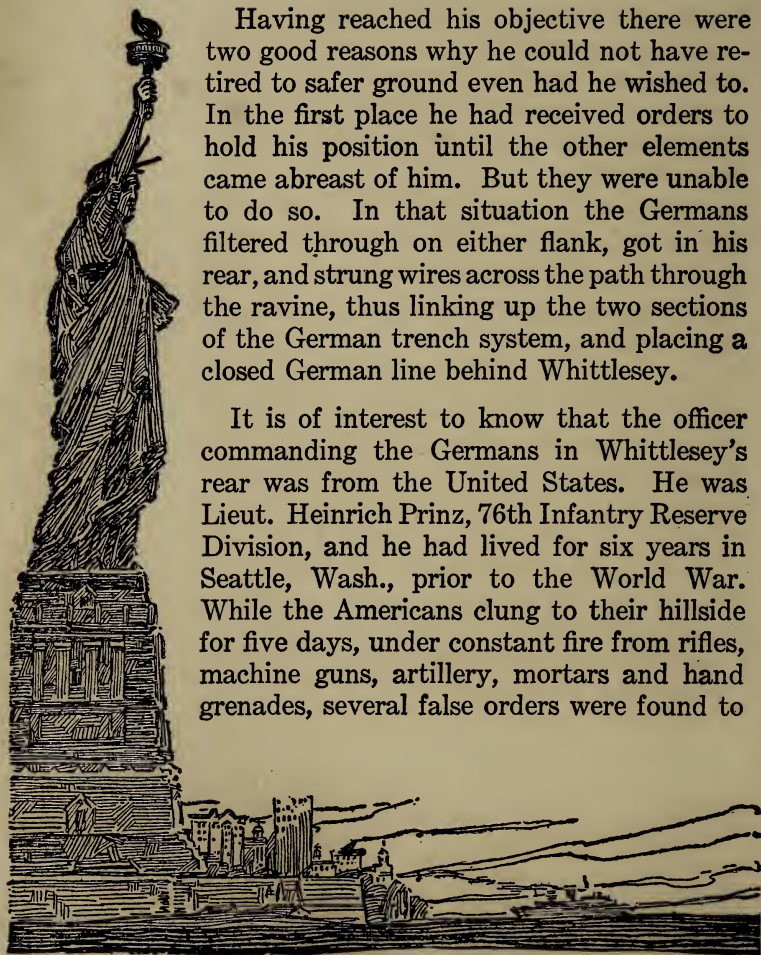
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testified to in the undramatic language of his official Operations Report written October 9th, the day following his relief. He writes: "The advance was continued to the objective stated, which was reached at 6 p.m. with about 90 casualties from M. G. fire. Two German officers, 28 prisoners and 3 machine guns were captured. His trench system was crossed, one heavily wired."

Here then we have Whittlesey and his composite battalion on their objective—the Pocket—under competent and mandatory orders. This answers the question raised by the New York newspaper quoted above as to whether the lawyer-soldier might not have been driven to suicide through a feeling of guilt for having led his men into a trap. He led them there because he was ordered to, and his later troubles resulted from the inability of units on his right and left to make advances equal to his. He and his command, therefore, were left "up in the air."



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Having reached his objective there were two good reasons why he could not have retired to safer ground even had he wished to. In the first place he had received orders to hold his position until the other elements came abreast of him. But they were unable to do so. In that situation the Germans filtered through on either flank, got in his rear, and strung wires across the path through the ravine, thus linking up the two sections of the German trench system, and placing a closed German line behind Whittlesey.

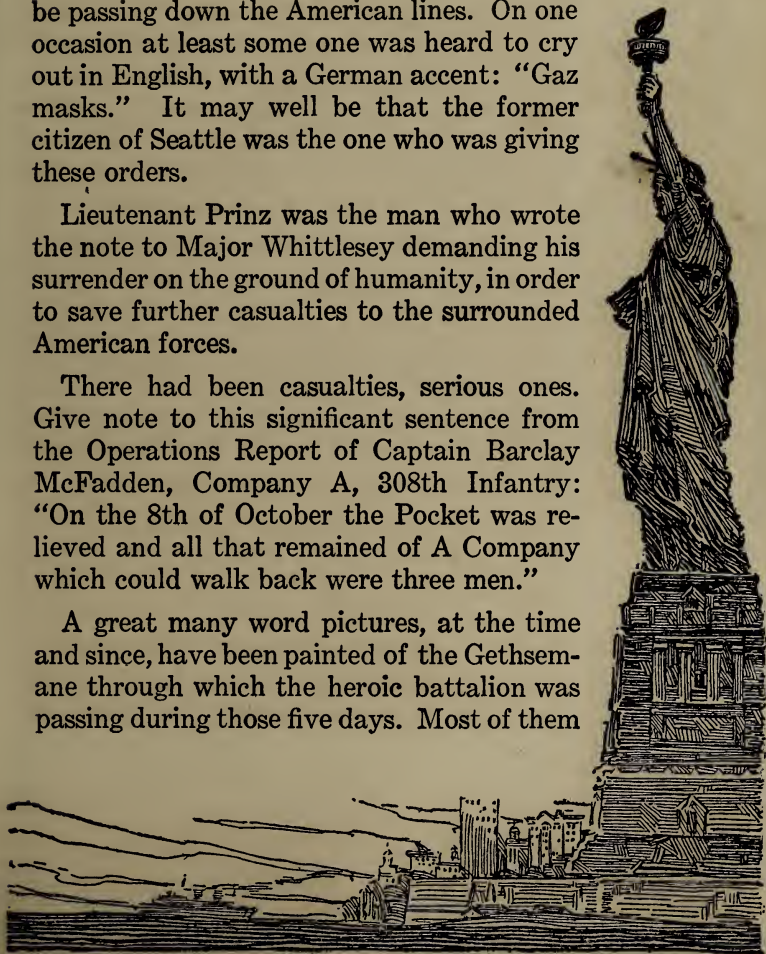
It is of interest to know that the officer commanding the Germans in Whittlesey's rear was from the United States. He was Lieut. Heinrich Prinz, 76th Infantry Reserve Division, and he had lived for six years in Seattle, Wash., prior to the World War. While the Americans clung to their hillside for five days, under constant fire from rifles, machine guns, artillery, mortars and hand grenades, several false orders were found to

be passing down the American lines. On one occasion at least some one was heard to cry out in English, with a German accent: "Gaz masks." It may well be that the former citizen of Seattle was the one who was giving these orders.

Lieutenant Prinz was the man who wrote the note to Major Whittlesey demanding his surrender on the ground of humanity, in order to save further casualties to the surrounded American forces.

There had been casualties, serious ones. Give note to this significant sentence from the Operations Report of Captain Barclay McFadden, Company A, 308th Infantry: "On the 8th of October the Pocket was relieved and all that remained of A Company which could walk back were three men."

A great many word pictures, at the time and since, have been painted of the Gethsemane through which the heroic battalion was passing during those five days. Most of them



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were fanciful, based on stories told by self-nominated heroes or by artists in words who were not there. In this connection it is interesting to read what the chief actor in the drama was writing himself, and sending back to headquarters by his carrier pigeons, the only line of communication left open.

Pigeon No. 1—"We are being shelled by German artillery. Can we not have artillery support?"

Pigeon No. 2—"Our posts are broken, one runner captured. Germans in small numbers in our left rear. Have located German mortar and sent platoon to get it. E Company met heavy resistance—at least 20 casualties."

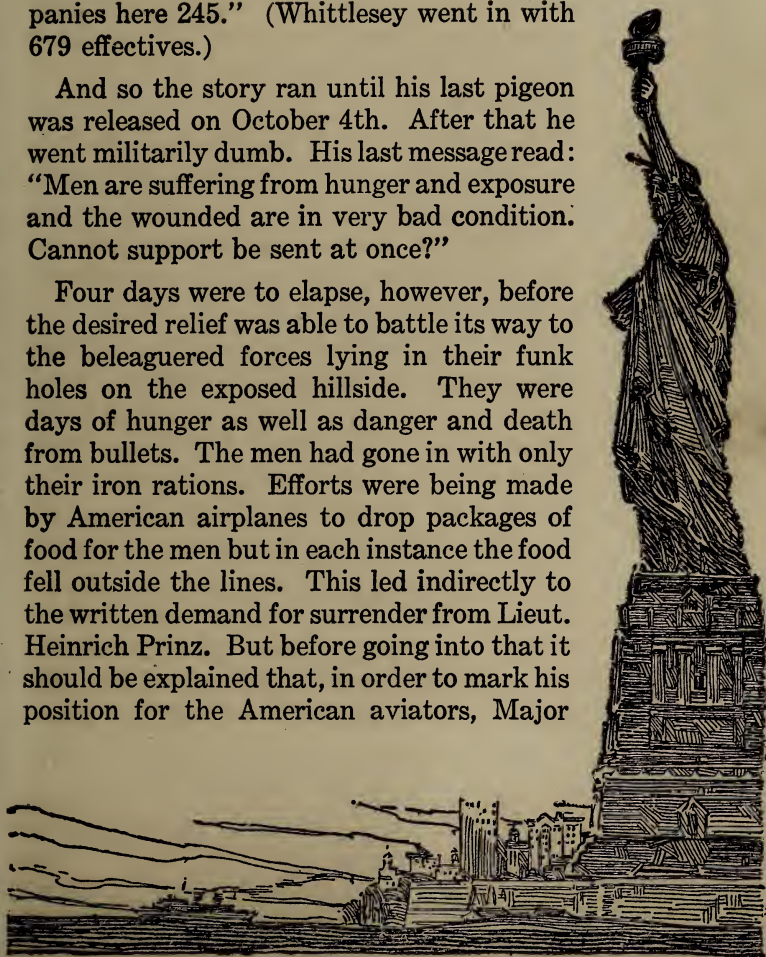
Pigeon No. 3—"Germans are on cliff north of us and have had to evacuate both flanks. Situation on left flank very serious. Broke through two of our runner posts today. Casualties yesterday 8 killed, 80 wounded. In the same companies today 1 killed, 60 wounded. Present effective strength of com-

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panies here 245." (Whittlesey went in with 679 effectives.)

And so the story ran until his last pigeon was released on October 4th. After that he went militarily dumb. His last message read: "Men are suffering from hunger and exposure and the wounded are in very bad condition. Cannot support be sent at once?"

Four days were to elapse, however, before the desired relief was able to battle its way to the beleaguered forces lying in their funk holes on the exposed hillside. They were days of hunger as well as danger and death from bullets. The men had gone in with only their iron rations. Efforts were being made by American airplanes to drop packages of food for the men but in each instance the food fell outside the lines. This led indirectly to the written demand for surrender from Lieut. Heinrich Prinz. But before going into that it should be explained that, in order to mark his position for the American aviators, Major



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Whittlesey had placed in position the white cloth panels employed in the Army for such a purpose. These later were to play a part in the drama.

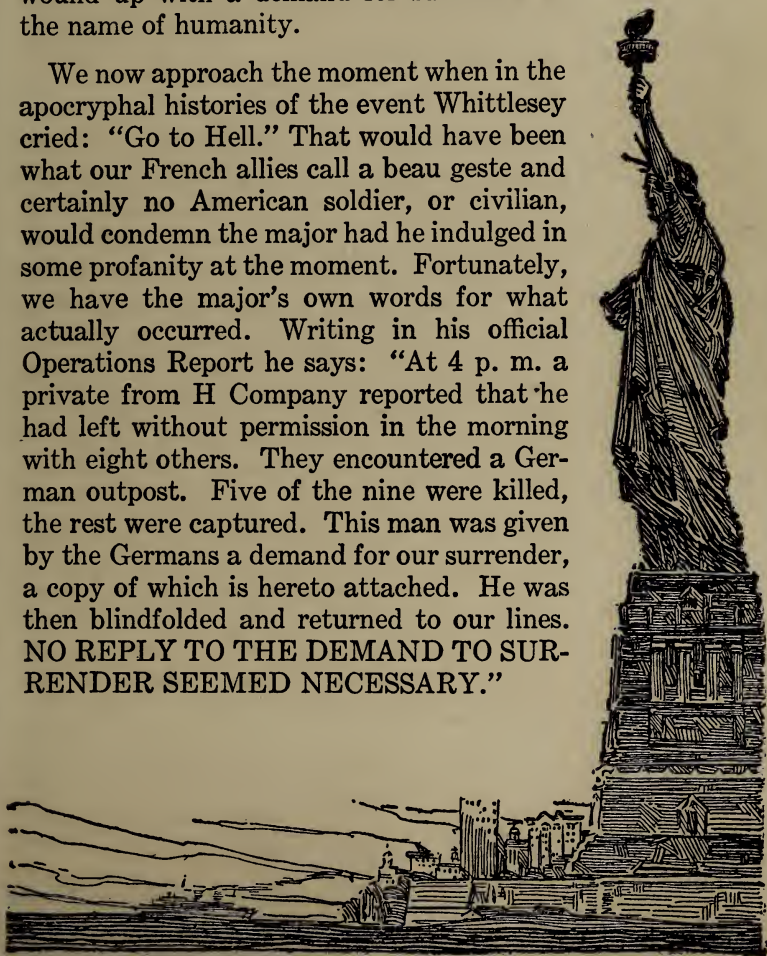
It was tantalizing to the suffering, hungry men to see the precious food meant for them falling outside their position. Nine men, without asking permission, went out into No Man's Land to search for some of the fallen parcels. They paid a heavy penalty. Five were killed, four captured. Among the latter was private Growell R. Hollingshead. These men fell into the hands of the German forces commanded by Lieutenant Prinz. The latter already knew by observation and reconnaissance what extremities the Americans were in. With some difficulty he compelled Private Hollingshead, blindfolded, to carry a note to Major Whittlesey demanding surrender.

The note was couched in polite terms, praised the bravery of the Americans, and

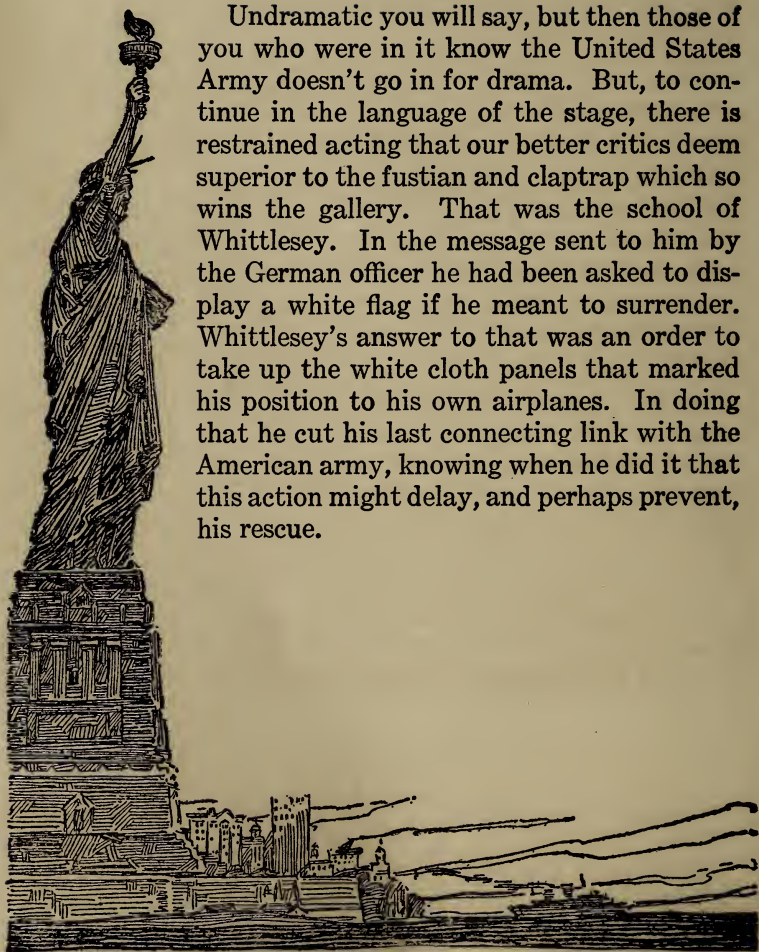


wound up with a demand for surrender in the name of humanity.

We now approach the moment when in the apocryphal histories of the event Whittlesey cried: "Go to Hell." That would have been what our French allies call a beau geste and certainly no American soldier, or civilian, would condemn the major had he indulged in some profanity at the moment. Fortunately, we have the major's own words for what actually occurred. Writing in his official Operations Report he says: "At 4 p. m. a private from H Company reported that he had left without permission in the morning with eight others. They encountered a German outpost. Five of the nine were killed, the rest were captured. This man was given by the Germans a demand for our surrender, a copy of which is hereto attached. He was then blindfolded and returned to our lines. NO REPLY TO THE DEMAND TO SURRENDER SEEMED NECESSARY."



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Undramatic you will say, but then those of you who were in it know the United States Army doesn't go in for drama. But, to continue in the language of the stage, there is restrained acting that our better critics deem superior to the fustian and claptrap which so wins the gallery. That was the school of Whittlesey. In the message sent to him by the German officer he had been asked to display a white flag if he meant to surrender. Whittlesey's answer to that was an order to take up the white cloth panels that marked his position to his own airplanes. In doing that he cut his last connecting link with the American army, knowing when he did it that this action might delay, and perhaps prevent, his rescue.

The Demand for Surrender

TO the Commanding Officer—Infantry,
77th Division.

"Sir:—The bearer of this present, Private
....., has been taken prisoner
by us. He refused to give the German Intelli-
gence Officer any answer to his questions, and
is quite an honorable fellow, doing honor to
his Fatherland in the strictest sense of the
word.

"He has been charged against his will, be-
lieving that he is doing wrong to his country
to carry forward this present letter to the
officer in charge of the battalion of the 77th
Division, with the purpose to recommend
this commander to surrender with his forces,
as it would be quite useless to resist any more,
in view of the present conditions.

"The suffering of your wounded men can
be heard over here in the German lines, and
we are appealing to your humane sentiments
to stop. A white flag shown by one of your
men will tell us that you agree with these
conditions. Please treat Private.....
as an honorable man. He is quite a soldier.
We envy you.

The German Commanding Officer."



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The Fight of the Lost Battalion



Back of Florent, in the Argonne Forest,
Were gathered a handful of men.
Waiting the word to "go in" once more;
To come out—God alone knew when.

East met West in those few short hours,
And were drawn together as one.
As brother to brother, and man to man,
They met to suppress the Hun.

Each of them was thinking thots
That come to but very few men,
Tomorrow they'd go "Over the Top,"
Some never to come back again.

The air and trees were full of sounds
As we started "in" that night;
With dull heavy thud of feet on the ground
We went marching towards the fight.

To an open space in the road we came
And God! what a sight we did see—
The skyline ablaze with one great red flame;
'Twas our barrage for Democracy.



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Sh-h! Hush! Make no noise,
As we're "Going In" real soon.
You could almost hear the heartbeats,
As we crept in platoon by platoon.

Soon we were in our places,
And we breathed a silent prayer,
As we waited, waited—and waited
Through an endless night "Up There."

At eleven P. M. that eventful night,
Our barrage opened up with a flare;
The earth it trembled and shook in fright,
And death just leaped through the air.

God! how the minutes dragged.
You'd think each one was a day
As we lay there waiting in the cold,
For dawn and break of day.

At last five-thirty, the "Zero Hour" came,
And the word passed down the line;
Go "Over the Top," and "Play the Game,"
And break their damn "Kremhilde line."



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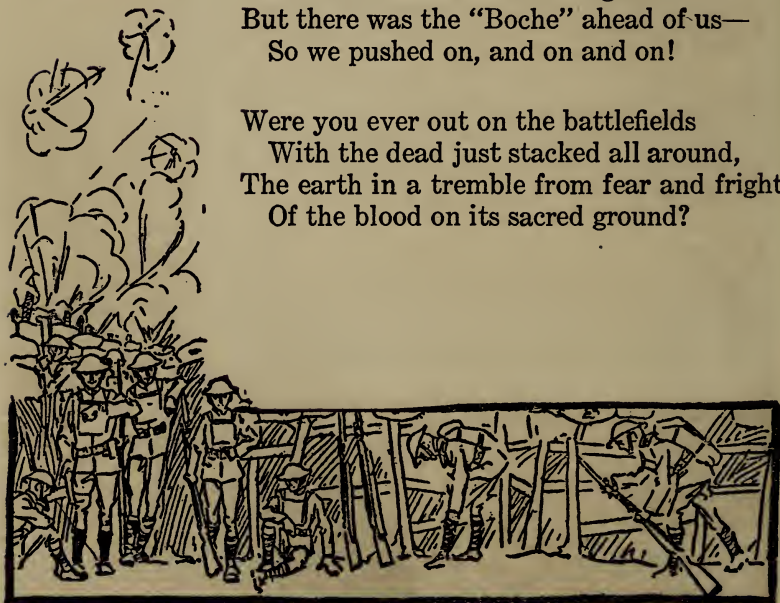


What did we find when "Over the Top";
In that waste called "No Man's Land"?
An ocean of wire in the mist and the fog,
Placed there by the devil's own hand.

All day long we pushed him back,
By night we'd his second line trench;
Then we "dug in," and waited for him,
By morn, with the rain we were drenched.

The men were gaunt with hunger,
For what food we had was gone—
But there was the "Boche" ahead of us—
So we pushed on, and on and on!

Were you ever out on the battlefields
With the dead just stacked all around,
The earth in a tremble from fear and fright
Of the blood on its sacred ground?



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While comrades you loved as brothers, and
more,

Lay wounded, and moaning in pain;
In your heart a gnawing emptiness—
Was that costly price worth the gain?

Three days we went, till our strength was
spent,

'Mid sights too terrible to tell.
By the time we were caught in a trap that
night,
I can tell you, we'd all seen hell.

Exhausted from fighting and dead for sleep,
We dug ourselves in for the night;
And as we lay there 'neath the shell-split air
We felt 'twas the end of our fight.

At break of dawn the Boche closed in.
We met him face to face
And many there were who fell that day—
But night found us still in our place.



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For three long days we fought in that trap,
In mud clear up to our knees—
Sleepless, hungry, dying from thirst,
'Neath those splintered Argonne trees.

All hopes gone, our hearts in despair,
When a whisper came down the line
At last the longed-for relief had arrived,
God knows it came just in time.

We went at the food like a pack of wolves,
That had starved the whole winter through,
And between the munching of bites you'd
hear
Mumbled prayers—and curses, too.

No one could picture, try as they might,
The horror and hell of it all.
Our company lost ninety men before night,
It seemed to matter as nothing at all.

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But on and on we carried the fight,
And we crushed the best they had,
We gained our objective,—were trapped
again.

Then we went mad—fighting mad.

On the side of a cliff two hundred feet high,
We dug in like so many moles—
And death was the penalty that you paid,
Should you stick your head from those
holes.

Did you ever lay out in the cold all night,
When the frost just creeps through the air?
When death and misery stalks thru the night,
Like a giant bat of despair?

If you have, then perhaps you can sense
Of the things I'm trying to tell,
And why every man who came out alive,
Could say that he'd lived through hell.



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Fighting all day, holding out by pure grit,
And fighting at night by the flare,
The suffering we bore can never be told,
Of those six days and nights spent there.

Death thinned our ranks, took tenfold her
toll,
Of our buddies, your brothers and sons;
But before they went, tho their strength was
spent,
They took their share of Huns.

Relief came at last as it always does
When you're backed by red-blooded men;
But we were so weak, so many were gone,
Nothing mattered at all by then.

We stumbled out more dead than alive,
To food, shelter and rest,
While others tenderly cared for those
Who had passed to eternal rest.

* * * *

Countless questions people will ask
About that terrible war;
"Our Company went in two-fifty strong—
And came out with but forty and four."



Mother

At the close of a spring day in Sable,
I sat in my room alone—
The sun was slowly sinking
And my thots turned back to home.



Thots of my dear old mother,
And how much was hers to bear;
Then in fancy I could see her
In the old familiar chair.



Always thinking of me,
And always praying, too;
Slowly, the truth dawned on me,
Of how much she'd been thru.

Of the long, endless nights of waiting,
And those anxious days of pain;
Wishing, hoping, praying,
That I might return again.



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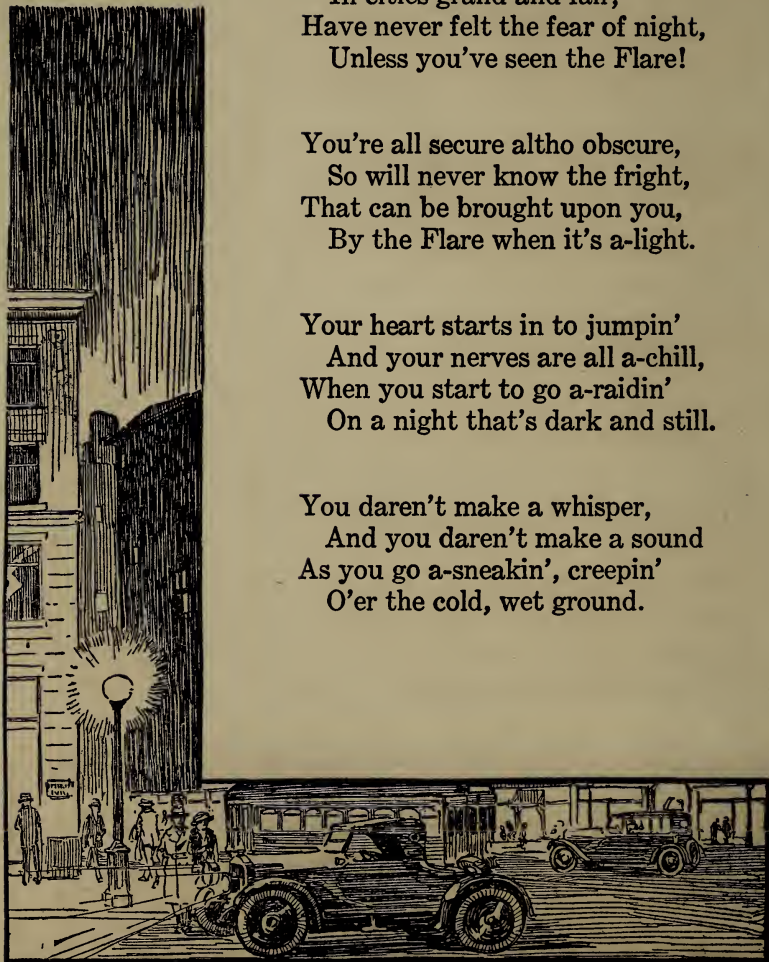
The Flare!

You who know electric lights,
In cities grand and fair,
Have never felt the fear of night,
Unless you've seen the Flare!

You're all secure altho obscure,
So will never know the fright,
That can be brought upon you,
By the Flare when it's a-light.

Your heart starts in to jumpin'
And your nerves are all a-chill,
When you start to go a-raidin'
On a night that's dark and still.

You daren't make a whisper,
And you daren't make a sound
As you go a-sneakin', creepin'
O'er the cold, wet ground.

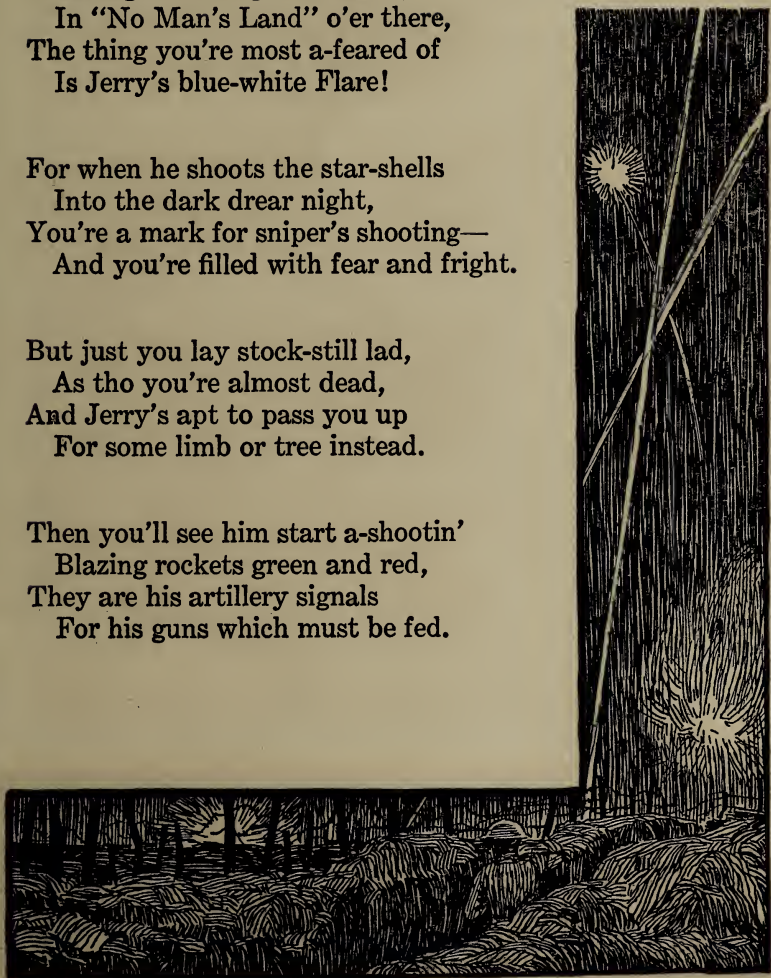


Crawling o'er the gutted earth,
In "No Man's Land" o'er there,
The thing you're most a-feared of
Is Jerry's blue-white Flare!

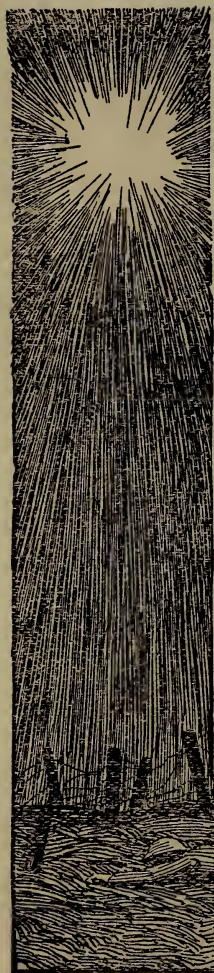
For when he shoots the star-shells
Into the dark drear night,
You're a mark for sniper's shooting—
And you're filled with fear and fright.

But just you lay stock-still lad,
As tho you're almost dead,
And Jerry's apt to pass you up
For some limb or tree instead.

Then you'll see him start a-shootin'
Blazing rockets green and red,
They are his artillery signals
For his guns which must be fed.



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You break into a cold wet sweat
As you cut your way thru wire.
You want to even up a score,
And your heart is all a-fire.

So thru the night that's sometime dim,
And sometime lit by flare,
You crawl and creep as thru an age,
An' softly swear and swear!

Then just as dawn is breaking
In a fever-tinted light,
You slowly come a-creepin' in,
With two you got that night.

You're bewildered and bemuddled
To know that you learned out there,
That the thing that put real fear in you,
Was Jerry's blue-white Flare.

The Debt

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My Pals are all around me,
It seems like a horrible dream,
But there goes my "Buddie" damn badly hit,
I go mad when I hear his scream.

My blood boils up in red, red rage,
And I lose the last of my will;
I'm turned to beast and mad-man,
And my cry is to kill—to kill!

I rage and mutter all the night,
And wait for the break of day;
For my mind is mad with that one thot,
They must re-pay!—re-pay!

* * * *

You're gone old Pal, so why should I lie
And say that life's worth while?
Oh gladly I'd join you where you are,
Just to see once again your smile.

I'll try my best to square the debt,
But, Pal, it can never be done;
So may you rest in peace o'er here,
'Neath the new-made cross that you've
won.



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Doughboy"*

Treasures

Treasures in bits of papers,
Treasures in mines of gold,
Treasures in age seared relics,
And in paintings worn and old.

Each to his way of thinking,
Has a treasure in his grasp.
Mine came from the heart of a rough-neck,
And lay in a simple hand-clasp.

'Twas in the lines in the heat of a fight
And the devil was our host.
He showed us all his tricks and stunts,
As we lay in a stranded outpost.

Without water, food or shelter,
We had lain out there for days;
Exhausted and slowly dying,
Our eyes beginning to glaze.

Our orders were to hold that post
Against any odds that might come,
And we were sticking it out alone,
Myself and my Dago chum.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Just a bit of a so-called Wop
Was this boy along with me;
But fighting just as hard as I,
Who was born of Liberty.

It was, "Whata-da-hell? Let 'em a-come,
We fight 'em-a hard, you and I!
Whatsa the diff'? It's-a all for da cause,
And somatime we moosta die.

Myself, I got-a da sweet leetle wife,
That's-a wait at home for me—
Deesa war she's one damn tough-a game
But we gotta have Liberty."

Then Tony told me his story
As we lay in post number four,
And why he was willing to fight and die
For the country he loved and adored.

"When-a I was just a leetle a-boy,
Back eena Sunny Italy,
I hear my father speak of a-thing,
That he call-a Liberty.

He tell of a country paved-a with gold,
Where every a-man is a-da same,
And-a I and evra a-boddy that tries,
Has gotta da chance for da fame.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*



Wher-a no King and Queen can tell-a you
Joosta what you got to do,
I'm a get-a thinkin' to myself,
How grand if datsa true.

So by-un-by I grow up,^a
Beega strong-a boy, 'bout seexteen;
And come along in a steerage boat,
To the wonderful land of my dream.

And there I find-a it's joosta so true,
Sure—Evra-ting is a-right!
I'm-a live in-a great-a free country,
My own-a boss day and a-night.

Evra-a-boddy he's joosta so free
Almost-a like da bird,
Joosta work so much-a evra day
No lik-a da sheep are you herd.

An' den, I meet-a my sweet-a Marie,
So we get-a marry one nic-a day,
And then we mak-a nic-a fine home.
By time, leetla babee cum our way.

An' evra thing she's-a joosta so nice,
And I'm a cum along joosta fine,
Until-a da Kaiz, he get so fresh,
Right along about deesa time.

Evra thing he want ta take,
An' mak-a do joost what he said.
I tell-a you I no like-a dat stoff;
I'd much-a rather be dead.

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

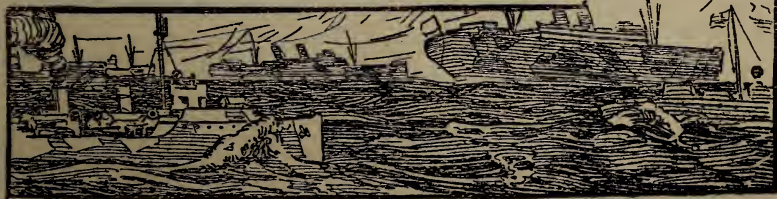
So I grab-a da gun and cum along,
Joost like all da rest who are here,
'Cause I'm gonna fight for what is right,
And-a my leetl-a home so dear.

I don't-a mind-a dees now,
'Cause we here all alone;
Evra teeng cum out all-a right,
An' by-time we all go home.

So joosta you lie quiet,
While I look-a 'round a-bit,
But don't-a forget to tell-a Marie,
In case I'm-a mabbe get hit."

He took and shook me by the hand,
And started out alone—
To me it brought an awakening,
And the treasure now I own.

So I'm done with material treasures,
Relics, mines, and things,
And treasure instead the memories,
Of love that sacrifice brings.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Detail Army

Doggone this Detail Army
Is all I've got to say.
Ever since the Armistice,
We've labored night and day.

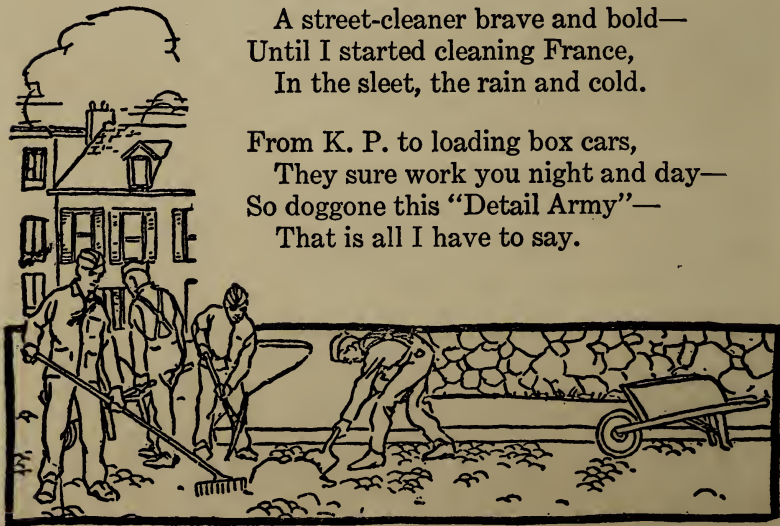


When the fighting was all over,
And I thot the job was done,
They just handed me a shovel
As they took away my gun.

The French Folks only laughed at us,
(They did it on the sly)
When our bold and noble white-winged squad
Went sadly marching by.

I never thot that I would be
A street-cleaner brave and bold—
Until I started cleaning France,
In the sleet, the rain and cold.

From K. P. to loading box cars,
They sure work you night and day—
So doggone this "Detail Army"—
That is all I have to say.



Cooties

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

When you're standing at attention,
And the cooties duck below;
Just the way they come for seconds,
Ain't it hell?—Well, I'll say so!

In the lines the boys were diggin'
With their shovels to get in;
While the "cootie" rigged his digger
With his rig for digging in.

At the front the Majors had 'em,
Every Captain raised his share;
But there sure was Hell a-poppin'
When a "Buck" had one to spare.

Each and every nation has them,
Both the great ones and the small;
But for "tame" and "naughty" cooties
—Rainy France, she leads them all.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

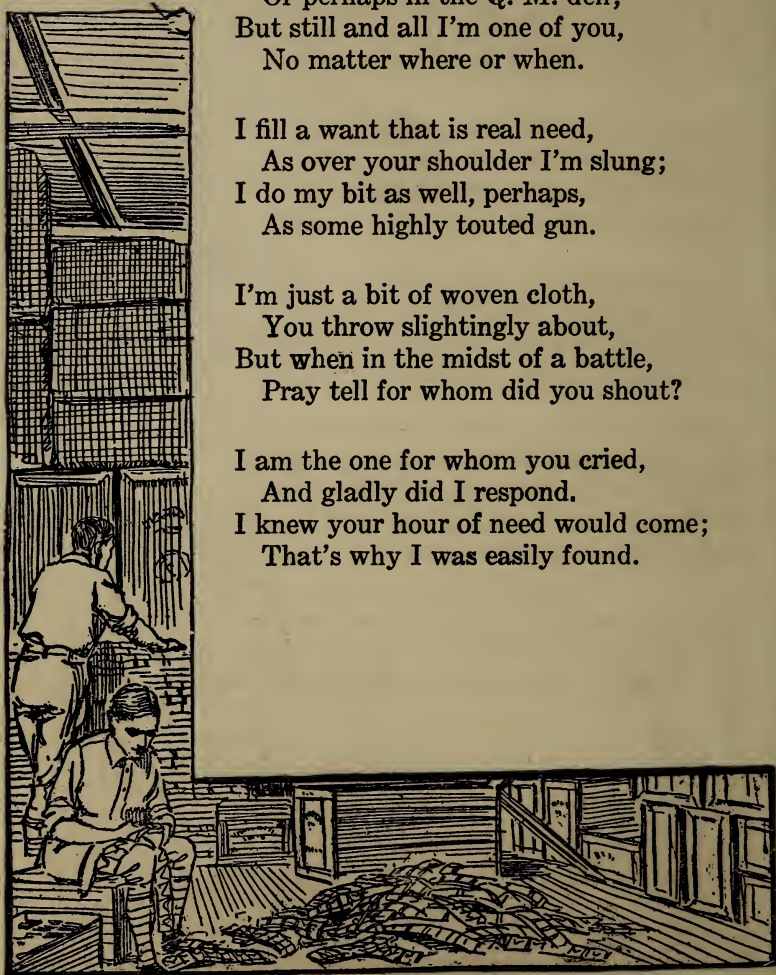
The Bandolier

Perhaps in the mud you've seen me,
Or perhaps in the Q. M. den;
But still and all I'm one of you,
No matter where or when.

I fill a want that is real need,
As over your shoulder I'm slung;
I do my bit as well, perhaps,
As some highly touted gun.

I'm just a bit of woven cloth,
You throw slightly about,
But when in the midst of a battle,
Pray tell for whom did you shout?

I am the one for whom you cried,
And gladly did I respond.
I knew your hour of need would come;
That's why I was easily found.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

I flung myself around your neck,
When you started into the fight,
Stop just a moment and reflect,
You'll see where I was right.

Just a lowly bit of drab patch cloth,
Humble protector of shell;
I served my purpose just as true,
As you who did so well.

So if again some day we meet,
Don't start and cuss and jeer,
Just remember your "right hand bower,"
Your humble old bandolier.

The bandolier was used as a carrier of our extra rifle ammunition, and they would hold 60 shells each. When going in the lines we would oftentimes pack from four to six of these slung across our shoulder, and we would heartily tell the world that they were heavy, etc., but it wasn't long before we were more than willing to pack them as we soon learned that in time of need they were our one best bet.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Thots!

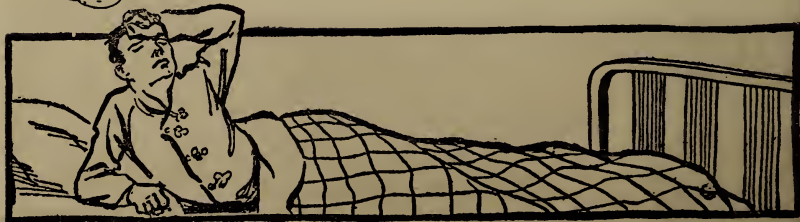


Oh! to escape the hell of it all,
Those war-ridden thots that come;
To blind forever those memories,
And the sound of the bullets' hum.

To live once more, as I did before,
In peace and quiet and rest;
To just forget for a little while,
That it took from my life the best.

At night, when everything's quiet,
And I'm lying alone in bed,
There comes a vision of battlefields,
The fight, the maimed and the dead.

Will I never forget that hell "Over There"
And the tales the battlefields tell—
The price my "Buddies" paid with "their
all,"
And the places in which they fell?



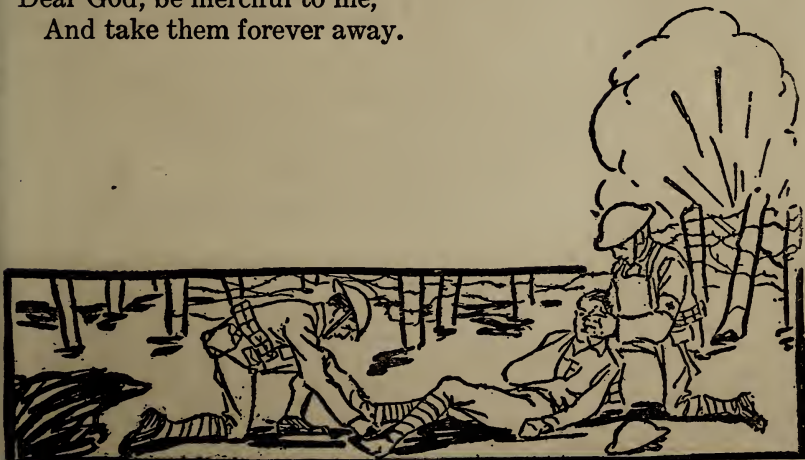
*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

And there are my two best "Buddies"
God, I see them as plain as can be;
A layin' "Out There" just crumpled heaps,
And seems like they're calling to me.

I can hear the big 'uns screech and scream,
As they go flying over my head;
They seem to say, both night and day—
"Remember the dead—the dead."

And sometimes I think, as I sit alone,
Perhaps it might have been best
If I like my buddies had paid the great price,
And were out there now with the rest.

Oh! those cursed thots of war
That haunt me night and day;
Dear God, be merciful to me,
And take them forever away.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Our Chaplain

He came and went amongst us,
With never a sign of a gun—
His mind unseared nor war-crazed,
With thots of taming the Hun.

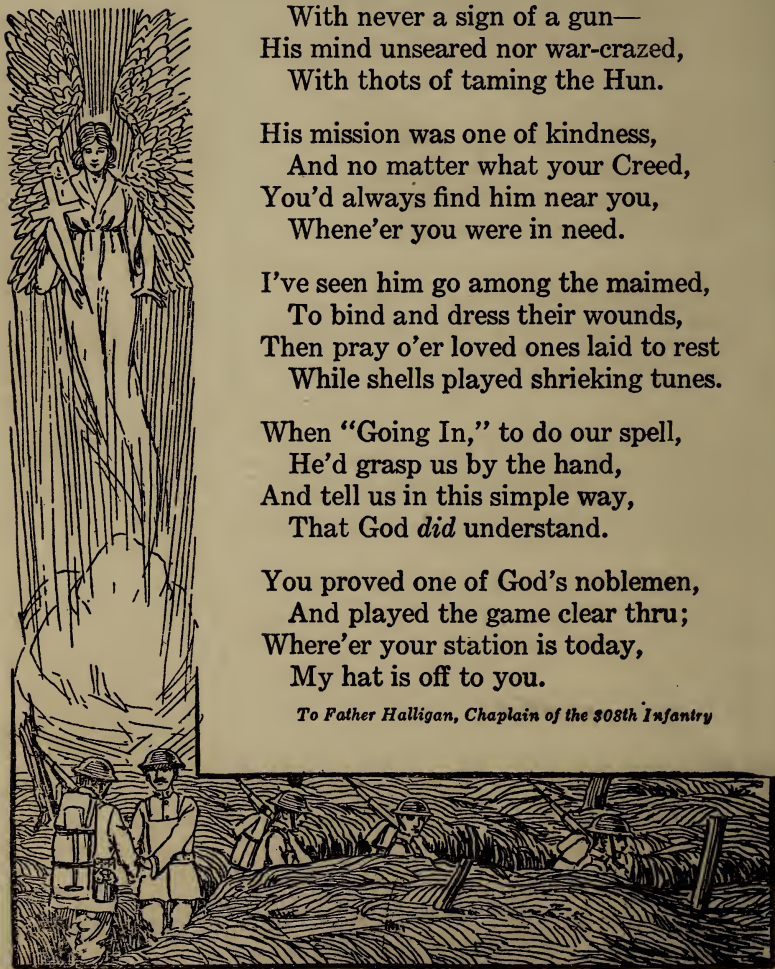
His mission was one of kindness,
And no matter what your Creed,
You'd always find him near you,
Whene'er you were in need.

I've seen him go among the maimed,
To bind and dress their wounds,
Then pray o'er loved ones laid to rest
While shells played shrieking tunes.

When "Going In," to do our spell,
He'd grasp us by the hand,
And tell us in this simple way,
That God *did* understand.

You proved one of God's noblemen,
And played the game clear thru;
Where'er your station is today,
My hat is off to you.

To Father Halligan, Chaplain of the 308th Infantry



Buddies

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
'Doughboy'"*

From the North, East, South or West,
When called upon, we sent our best.
Thru that "Melting Pot" o'er there,
Hearts were moulded, souls laid bare.

A simple greeting known as "Buddy"
Is worthy of a philosopher's study;
No matter whether man or lad,
That's the greeting we all had.

From as small a thing, as—"Gimme a light"
To laying down his life in a fight,
There was no color, nor was there creed,
Whenever a "Buddy" was in need.

A man may have been of the Gospel bred,
Or so low, that even his name was dead,
Yet when he grasped a "Buddy's" hand,
There passed a love they alone understand.

Country and color, creed and station,
Were moulded as one, in War's Devastation,
When "Buddies" went on to that unknown
goal,
Shoulder to shoulder, soul to soul.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

That Hike

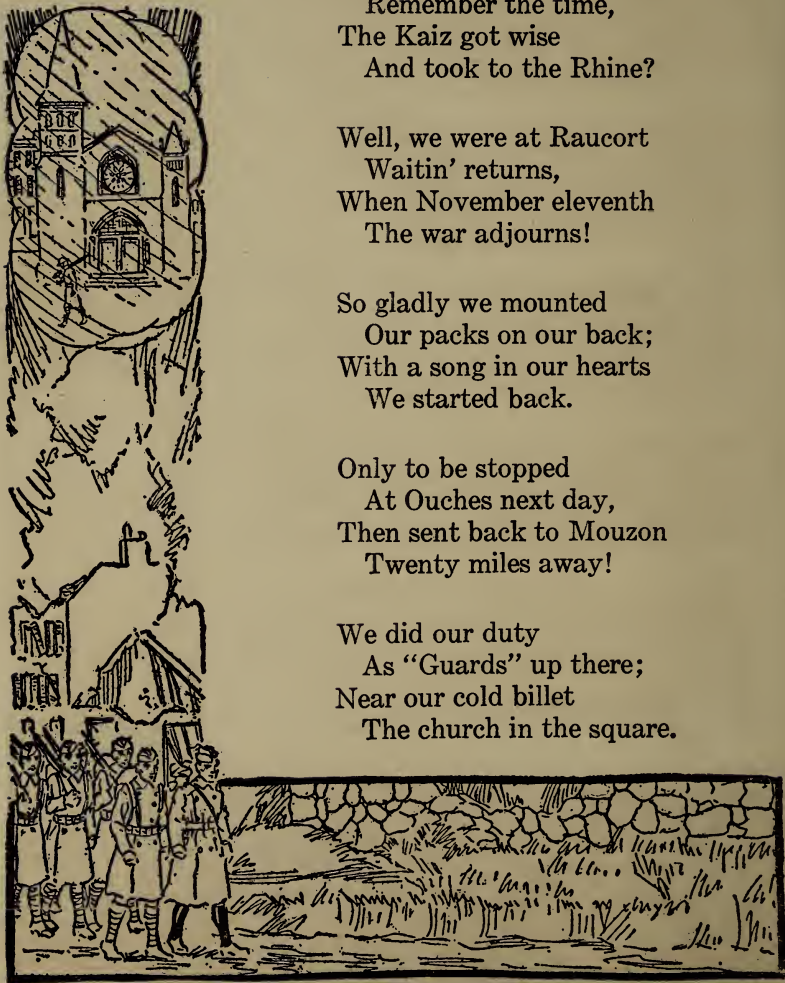
Hey, Fellows!—
Remember the time,
The Kaiz got wise
And took to the Rhine?

Well, we were at Raucort
Waitin' returns,
When November eleventh
The war adjourns!

So gladly we mounted
Our packs on our back;
With a song in our hearts
We started back.

Only to be stopped
At Ouches next day,
Then sent back to Mouzon
Twenty miles away!

We did our duty
As "Guards" up there;
Near our cold billet
The church in the square.



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Then came a rush order,
"Roll packs right away,"—
As we'd parade in New York
On Christmas Day!

Six days we hiked,
'Til we reached Floren'.
No doubt you remember—
We were damn near all in.

We were headed for home
So didn't give a rap:
We had been through the "Front"
And were hardened to that.

But when they delouzed us,
Oh Boy, how we swore!
"Hiked to Les Isalets,
Twelve kilos or more."

Then early and bright
The very next day,
We continued "That Hike"
"On to Broadway!"



*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

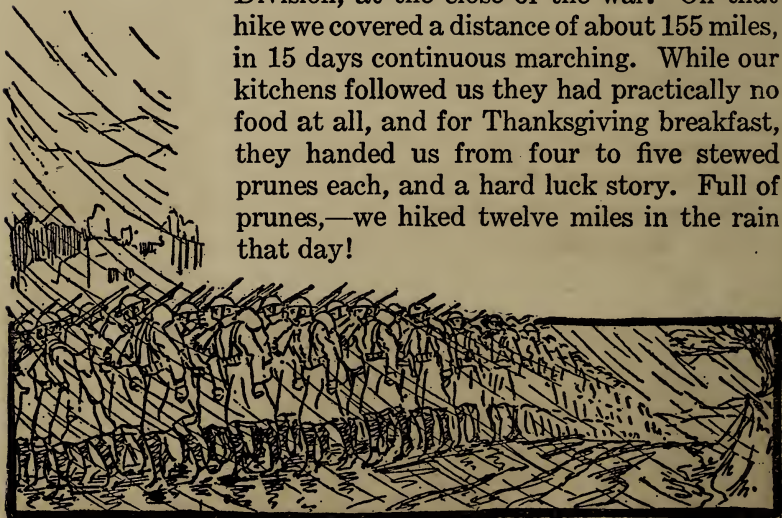


Nine more weary days
We hiked over hills,
'Til we finally landed
In Pointlavlille.

Why grumble now?—
It is all done and over,
And we are back home
In the land of clover.

But if ever you think,
Things are breaking tough—
Just remember "That Hike,"
"THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH!"

"THAT HIKE," is a true description of the forced march made by the entire 77th Division, at the close of the war. On that hike we covered a distance of about 155 miles, in 15 days continuous marching. While our kitchens followed us they had practically no food at all, and for Thanksgiving breakfast, they handed us from four to five stewed prunes each, and a hard luck story. Full of prunes,—we hiked twelve miles in the rain that day!



We Are Coming Back

"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

It's the coming back I hate worst of all,
It grates on my nerves worse than gall;
A wreck, they'll say, when I land today,
And with sighs of pity they'll turn away.

With empty sleeve and my face a mess,
I'm no more than half a man, I guess.
And it's tearing my heart slowly apart,
And I wonder how I'll make a new start.

I left these shores not so long ago,
As fit as any man who'd go;
I held my head high as could be,
And was proud to fight for Liberty.

For it isn't so hard to go in and fight
When you know your cause is more than
right;
And it isn't so hard for men to die—
The hardest of all is to hear folks sigh.

So help me forget—don't sympathize.
I can't get cheery on long-drawn sighs.
Just take and shake my one good hand,
Then I'll know that *you* understand.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

Homeward Bound

As I stand on this transport here by the rail,
Watching her plow thru the foam;
There's just one thing I can think about,
And that is, we're "Going Home."

Many's the time while at the front,
In some battle of raging hell;
I'd lift my voice to the One above,
That He guide me home safe and well.

All the sweetness and joys of life,
Are embodied in these two words:
"Homeward Bound," my, don't they sound
nice

When your heart's just as light as a bird's?

And I, for one, as I stand here alone,
Humbly thank my Maker above,
That I am spared to be "Homeward Bound,"
To the ones I so dearly love.



Let's Go!

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

'Twas Uncle Sammy's doughboys
That put "fini" on the Hun;
Now we're waiting for "That Transport"
And we'll take her on the run.

Oh, why do you wait, Mr. Baker?
Just send us a ship or a raft;
For the old U. S. A. and our freedom,
We'd sail on any old craft.

At first we were going home Christmas,
And then 'twas New Year's Day;
But now it's the fifteenth of April,
—Unless they change it to May.

Now General Pershing's motto
Is a good one, we all know;
"Let's get where we're going today, boys,"
And you bet, we're ready to go!

The Statue of Liberty beckons
To her soldiers across the sea;
"Let's go!" and get where we're going,
Back home, to the land of the free.



"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"

The Price

Now listen here, old Pal of mine,
I've fought from the Vesle clear up to the
Rhine,
At Chateau-Thierry and in the Argonne
Wood,
I did my bit as best I could.

I've cut my way through an ocean of wire,
And stood the test when under fire.
I've lain in the cold and rain all night,
Fought like hell for what I thot was right.

I've marched to the band and felt mighty
proud,
Because I was one of that fighting crowd,
Now I'm back in this land of ours,
And will be in my civvies in a few short hours.

But, somehow or other it all seems bare,
And I feel like hell when people stare;
For some are thinking of loved ones lost,
And others of how much we're going to cost.

And that's the bunch I'm sore about;
The patriot who was so willing to shout,
Then turn us out when we came home,
On two months' pay in the world to roam.



The Returns

*"Rhymes
of a
Lost Battalion
Doughboy"*

Buddy of mine, you're wrong, all wrong,
You'll soon again be one of the throng,
Not as you were when you went away,
But a proved man now, the man of the day!

Why, boy, just think of what you've been
thru,
And the glory of knowin' that you've been
true.

Think of the "Buddies" you've given a hand,
Why, you gained the love of your fellow man.

Think of the knowledge which was your gain,
When you pushed clear thru to Alsace-
Lorraine.

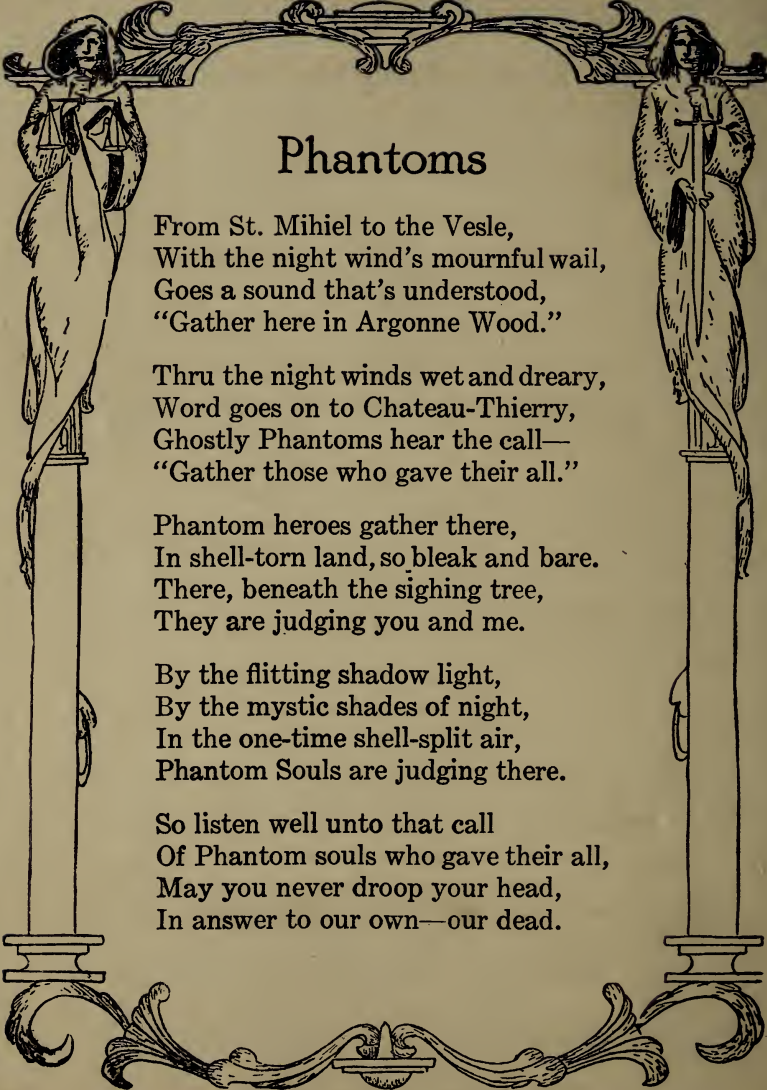
Think for a bit of those poor French folk,
You helped release from the War Dog's yoke.

Why, they expressed by their attitude,
An ocean of love and real gratitude!
And in one small second of that hellish war,
You've lived a thousand lives or more.

Tho you may not have your share of gold,
What you learned "Up There" is wealth
untold;

And the big thing you gained from what
you've been thru;
Is that high ideal of being true.





Phantoms

From St. Mihiel to the Vesle,
With the night wind's mournful wail,
Goes a sound that's understood,
"Gather here in Argonne Wood."

Thru the night winds wet and dreary,
Word goes on to Chateau-Thierry,
Ghostly Phantoms hear the call—
"Gather those who gave their all."

Phantom heroes gather there,
In shell-torn land, so bleak and bare.
There, beneath the sighing tree,
They are judging you and me.

By the flitting shadow light,
By the mystic shades of night,
In the one-time shell-split air,
Phantom Souls are judging there.

So listen well unto that call
Of Phantom souls who gave their all,
May you never droop your head,
In answer to our own—our dead.



The Author
"Buck Private" McCollum

L. C. McCOLLUM

732 South Wabash Ave.
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Author
and
Publisher of

The
"History and Rhymes
of the
Lost Battalion"

Dear Reader :

I wish to thank you for purchasing this copy of the "History and Rhymes of the Lost Battalion", and sincerely trust that you have enjoyed it from cover to cover.

Ofttimes I wonder "What are the thoughts of some of my readers?" after reading the simple little thoughts contained in my rhymes concerning that which is expected to be the unusual, but so often is the commonplace.

From time to time I receive many friendly letters from my readers, and many kind words have been spoken for my first efforts, and frankly, it is gratifying to have these friends. In all sincerity, I hope to have you as that sort of a friend.

Should you have enjoyed the book, pass the good word amongst your friends, and if they or you should desire additional copies that are not handled by your dealer or my representative, write me direct to the address above, and copies will be mailed to you at the same cost as your original copy.

Again thanking you, I remain

Most sincerely yours,

"Buck Private" McCollum



